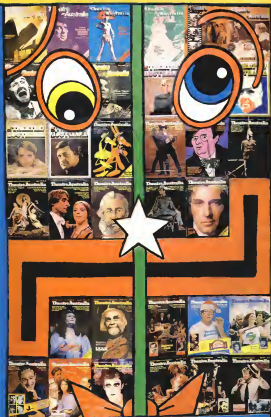


Australia's magazine of the performing arts

August 1979 \$1.95

# Theatre Australia





The national magazine of the performing arts

# Theatre Australia



August 1979

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# #COMMENT#

## Happy Birthday To Us

Martin Sharp's splendid comic for our birthday issue is an homage to the delights of *TJ* as the clown's face is the fairground fun of Luna Park.

The magazine's very existence is as bold as the primary colours of the design, as unapologetic, saying power is graphically summed up in the thirty magazine covers included. Trueman blowing it may be to claim such records but, with the Government lines of Cragg, Gubbins and Cuckoo over breathing down our necks, necessary.

The smiling and frowning profiles which Martin Sharp once together could run only for the traditional comic and tragic tales of theatre but indicate too the ups and downs of a three year effort to pull together in one publication the multifarious activities of performing arts across the nation.

In these years we have seen the demise of the Old Tote and against that the founding of the Sydney Theatre Company, the collapse of the old J.C. Williamson and the remarkable rise of the Koro Brothers/Michael Edgely organisations and only the second and third Australian plays

after a twenty year gap reaching Broadway — though neither lasted long.

If the four theatres look increasingly solid, the first day second companies seem to be in a better position than ever to keep them on their feet. Brisbane is suddenly leading with professional troupes. Hecate drops all doors wrong has extended its place on the Melbourne scene, the Main in Perth has a new director and administrator and in Adelaide the Association of Community theatres has become a real force, especially with the recognition of David Allen's Red Bird and a drift of young theatre efforts.

Three years has seen more ups than downs and more laughs than frowns. It is no small thanks to *Theatre Australia* that the range and diversity of the activity here is increasingly being recognised on the world cultural map.

Our existence wouldn't have been possible without the loyal support of you, our readers; we invite your comment on the magazine and its future. In the meantime our thanks to all the people who have worked to maintain its vitality and wish ourselves a Happy Birthday.

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"No. Please, really, oh Mr. Sharp!"

## “?” QUOTES & QUERIES “?”



Cost design by Warren Sharp

### ADELAIDE'S DRAW FOR SPONSORS

**CHRISTOPHER HUNT, Director, Adelaide Festival.**

"We have mounted a very big and fairly recently American campaign to raise funds for the Festival. It's really on three levels, small individual donations or large numbers, relatively few large, corporate donations that are not tied to any specific events, and large sponsorships at such which involve planning the names of particular firms over specific events, or an aspect of the Festival, or a series of concerts. This is what the Supersans Foundation have done with their \$30,000 for the State Opera's *Death in Venice*."

"It's too early to say what's happening with the first one — we're leaving the smaller ones till we've captured the big fish, but so far the main page seems to have paid off for a number of firms, and it does become a headache. I do think that Adelaide has a special privilege as far as the arts go, it doesn't have that much to offer in economic and commercial terms, but it is in the interest of businesses trying to work in the arts to promote the quality of life. And the arts and the life style that surrounds them can be used to encourage commercial sponsors to put in money."

"Roughly speaking, the first provision deficit for the Festival after subsidy from the Australian Council falls into three parts. One third is for administration and publicity which is covered by the State Government, one third is paid for by box office returns, and the third we hope to recover from the private sector. In that case we are aiming for a 400% increase on last year — so far we have already got a 350% increase, and we need the rest by October. If we don't get that

amount by then we will simply have to make cutbacks on the programme. I've had to cut back on my dream plan, but there has been nothing serious yet. If we don't make the 400%, I think the cancellations will affect the standard of the Festival, but with the way things are going so far I'm optimistic."

### DUNHILL'S ASSOCIATION BENEFITS

**ADRIAN BOOM, State Theatre Company of SA.**

"It is the first time that Dunhill have given money to a drama company and I cannot say how much, but we hope it will be an ongoing thing. It is also the first time the State Theatre Company has received significant funding from the private sector. We've approached people from time to time in the past but this time we think Dunhill were attracted because they could see the benefits in supporting the State Theatre Company — that is just from being associated with us — and we're acknowledging them on our programme and as our subscription brochure. Proudly sponsored by the House of Dunhill."

"As Mr Malcolm Gray, Chairman of the Board of Governors of the State Theatre Company said 'Without assistance of this nature from the private sector it would be difficult to further develop the high standard of theatre which is earning the STC the reputation of being Australia's leading drama company'."

### MURPHY'S SENSUAL SIGNATURE

**JANINE BYLLE, House Co-NSW.**

"Signatures photographed by Graham (Murphy) to capture the individual talents of the company is a series of voices, stories and lives made together. It is a work for the whole company, it is fun and happy, even the music, the piano duos, is very song-like. They will in fact be played on stage by Denise Monaghan. Really, *Signatures* is a series of studies by the dancers too, designed to catch in on the individualities of the company with their particular abilities, their jumps or lyricalism, movement — depending on the music."

Scholarwerk is a very different piece. It is from the Ravel Song Cycle (which is different from the Ravel Requiem version) and is music which has long been a favourite with Graham — it is unusual. It is only 10-20 minutes long, and when Graham has composed a work specially for specific people — James Vernon, Sherie Du Cose, Ben Philip and Graham Murphy himself. When he imagined with a feeling like that from a Graham Klimt painting, the beautiful faces —

black and white, pale and angular and with colour in a mosaic gold-creating."

The costumes are in the Klimt style too and are designed by Kristian Fredericks. I can vouch for their beauty for I've worn one. The set is a cavernous silk hanging, with dancers on raised in the sides (the walls, so they appear to look like a Klimt painting). The ballet explores human relationships, those between women, men and women, and men, in the dances. There's no real story line, just the mood of the intensity of the music. It really is a mood piece."

### AMBIVALENT MARSUPIALS

**BARRY GASKILL**

"When we were in London, whenever I got home, I'd go to the little library in Australia House and look at the newspapers. Fraser, Winston Hawke, Fraser, Winston Hawke — a tight little self-enclosed world spinning round its own axis — a used to make me feel badly, like putting down a hole under a car."

Then for one of the characters in *Marsupials*, which the Melbourne Theatre Company are performing at Russell Street in September. This is just how I felt during my eighteen months in London as home in a media and theatre metropolis, a more intense intellectual culture than my own — and yet estranged, because its ways weren't mine. My sensibility, my style for lack of it had been shaped differently — and then returning would have taken most of me with them."

In *Marsupials* I've tried to explore this ambivalence — the tug a wife who wants to make a career in London and a husband who wants to stay where he is in Melbourne."

To articulate the changes in their relationship I've developed a kind of crystalline realism which avoids the immediate sensation of life as polemicism of naturalism with the use of a sequence of short, sharp scenes, each focusing on a simple point or image and each pointing the way to the next."

### CLASSIC AMERICAN DIRECTION

**ALDY FREED, Producer, Ensemble Theatre.**

"Long Day's Journey into Night is an American production but one being produced by the Sydney Theatre Company at the Opera House. Our director, Robert Lewis, is coming from Australia especially to do this for us. He is a very distinguished American and a complete authority on O'Neill — he's made a life time study of his work and directed many of his plays. He is also a noted teacher."

Hopie Gordon, Artistic Director of the En-

## Q & Q

sonic) was in his production of *Shogakukan* in the early '80s in Australia and they have been friends since that time. From time to time he's asked them if he would like to come out here but it was never convenient. Though it has been one asked over the years. Robert Lewis follows the same teaching methods that Hagen uses and while he is not here he will also give two seminars for 31 July and 3 August directly aimed at actors and directors.

We were asked if we would do one of the British American classes for the Sydney Theatre Company's season — Hagen is an American and we do a lot of American plays — and in discussion Long Day's Journey into Night seemed a good one to do. It hasn't been produced in Sydney since 1952. We have a cast that will include Frances Conroy, Kevin Miles, Matt Fickers, David White and Steven Gandy.

## NATIONAL BACK UP FOR STREETLIGHT

**JUAN AMERSON, WA Correspondent**

"The perennial problem for playwrights is it — how to get the play on? In Perth the problem seems to have been more difficult than elsewhere. The playwrights are isolated, as partially closed seasons, not in contact with one another and with no focal point of theatre as such in corporations and develops public.

But there are hopeful signs that the situation is about to change.

Jim David, playwright, now director and actor, has with Fiona McKillop, Sally Crawford and Brian Tompkins, formed the Streetlight Company, and as this production is not a play of their called it, a season that looks closely at the Emperor's New Clothes Syndrome of present day art and the pretensions that surround it. It has the complex role of writer/director and is also using the past of Victorian theatre poster.

Art is having a three week season at the Green Room of the National Theatre, which has been made possible by Stephen Barry's policy of assistance to new plays. The National Theatre Company provides the theatre publicly back up, developmental and technical advice, acting in an umbrella capacity.

Jim David's Art is just the beginning, for there more productions are planned. Good luck to Streetlight's enterprise."

## TRIPLE TRIPLE FIRST

**JUDITH ALKIN, ADK, Director, Tribuna**

Ron Ditch, a young Melbourne director and the author of *De Dure Resent* is not a man of half measures. His first commitment to the MTC's paymastered service was eight songs (and followed) in a month.

On March 25th 1979 the best of the night. *De Dure Resent* was given a private reading by the company and was extremely successful in a

result. This was followed on Sunday June 17th by a public reading directed by John Sanger for our Readings for Playwrights Tribunal Programme.

The second success of 110 people to this reading indicates that as we had suggested the play was controversial. While the topic is controversial, the handling of the subject matter is not. Prosecco, not highly entertaining, it maintains the format created in a traditional Jewish family where the younger son decides to depart from custom and marry out.

Now in *De Dure Resent* is released and while the opening production in the summer new space of Athenaeum 2 on September 16th I am assuming the play, a somewhat daunting but mostly challenging and understanding experience.

A new director, a new playwright and a new play — it's an exciting triple first for Tribunal and Melbourne audiences."

## TROCKADURO LIMERICKS

**PATRI MCKEIVIN, Patron.**

"When the laughter starts before the curtain goes up and continues through a programme of classical ballet — then Les Ballets Trockadero have let us in.

The Trocks as they are known are a group of male performers who dance in tutus as ballerinas. They reside in the US, many, are members of the Royal Dance Company of Lima and a research archeologist turned Company Manager. This is America's unique version ballet, they really mimic the world of classical and contemporary choreographers (with delight of audiences everywhere) and they have been local mainstays since particularly.

Their sense and gaiety in fact serves only to make the rich heritage of Western dance problems irrelevant as they stay to the company, is now firmly established and they receive their share with great success. The legend, Matherne observed that the ballerina is a womanly woman, woman with her body, the most metaphors of the company are not some wonderful poses and limericks, but they are never longer than when they are at their most subtle. From ballet to burlesque they beautifully executed parody strip away the pretence the dance should be anything other than enjoyable entertainment.

## TV/TLE CROSS FERTILISATION

**IAN DRISCOLL, Australian Film and Television School**

The idea of the conference (21 August to 1 September) is to get together people from as many fields as possible who deal with children — education, TLE teachers etc — and try and bring them together with TV people in the form of most drama dance papers, and TV.

We shall bring in groups of about 50 children, and the idea is to encourage the children's new role in workshops in these areas. We shall have a

video team there the whole time and the workshops will be screened from the video into the screen so that people can see exactly what the children are doing and how they are reacting. We hope this will lead to a lot of cross fertilisation between the TV people and, in particular, the TLE scene. Hopefully it will lead to some different TV programmes too, for the children and maybe different TLE too.

The idea is to find out just what children respond to. Is it the act and how it is presented to them and how they react that is important — for instance dance often includes music, and maybe small groups of dancers could be very effective. It is rumoured that Hagen Taylor's *Puffs* Children may be filmed and if this has the same effect on TV as it has on stage then it would be terrific.

## MULTI PURPOSE READINGS

**GRAEME BOUNDIE, Director, Hoppel.**

"There will be another season of selected readings if not at the end of this year then very early next. They are likely to become a regular part of our total programme in fact. We find them so good for the small reaction to a script. You see they are useful for the playwrights who see the play done but they're also useful for us and they are a very good sight a reinforcement. A couple from this year will probably be produced next year — *Quadrilateral* for instance. You should very worthwhile.

The last of the present series of readings, *1-1* Frances Popham's *Hyle* will be held at the Playbox Theatre at 4.00 pm on Sunday, 12 August."

## OBITUARY

**ROBERT QUINN**

Robert Quinn, one of the most influential figures in NSW Theatre of the past two decades, died at his Robertson home on July 26.

After working for the Old Vic in London he was brought out by Hugh Black to act as the General Manager for the ALTT Opera Co. In 1954 the Prince-Bishop had been appointed as Senior Lecturer in the Use of NSW English Department so that NIDA could be set up. Within a few years in 1958 he began his major work of rebuilding the Old Vic Theatre Company which after 15 years was to collapse just a year before his death.

He had transferred from the English Department to head the first independent Drama Department in Australia — with this being converted into a full chair in 1966. When he retired he was honoured with an overseas professorship.

He was associated with many other organisations including the Jane St Theatre, the ATPP and was the instigator of the NSW Drama Foundation which was generously named after him. We honour his memory.

## Ray Stanley's

# WHISPERS RUMOURS & FACTS

"What are you doing in the moment?" has been my question to many actors and actresses recently. Almost shamelessly they have replied that they are "going" in *Che Days*, *The Russian Year*, *The Young Doctors*, *Skyways*, *The Subliminal of Prisoner*. Why on earth are they so apologetic? At least it is a work — and often better than the less than good stage productions they offer as apologies for appearing in.

It is not often a musical sparks off a scandal, particularly 20 years later, but that is what seems likely to happen with *My Dearest*. And musical managers are being warned for the good unlikely subjects. Anouilh's *The White of the Turnabout* (made music by Harold Roman), Feller's fine *Adieu of the Sparrow* can be directed by Frank Denaldi, Philip Barry's old play *Midday* (young mostly unpublished music and lyrics by Cate Porter, and even *Adieu, Adieu* about *Nothing* (to be directed by Ian).

Remember *The Glass Menagerie*? Well, then comes, Joe Fenderson, is now working on *The Glass Menagerie*. Since opening date will be September 19 in Melbourne, and company manager Geoffrey Pittman currently is trying to decide for a full round Australia tour to follow the Melbourne season. Anyone interested in booking the show should contact 165 Mary Street, Richmond, Victoria, 3121 (Tel. 03 428 2277 or 652 5671).

It is true that *Madame Satou* has landed the male lead in *Bliss*! — Understand that could be a commercial production of *Stephan's Night and Day* (W. Dennis Page or Jane Fonda can be persuaded to come to Australia). There is also a possibility we will be seeing *Martha Stapan* (John Stapan) on *Are You Being Served?* (working on a play which might for night end be *Find The Lady*). And there's a whisper we could see Peter Allen in his Broadway show *Up In The Air*. But we definitely will have Derek Nomura work on once more this time in a new play.

Bellini Caroline Collier is toying with the idea of doing a one-woman show on Sophia Taylor, to be completed and directed by John O'Malley. Val Labman one of the leads in *Prisoner*, returns to the stage briefly in September to play *Carte* in *Southdown Prisoner* for a non-professional company. She is also going to direct ABC's *The Dark Bladder*.

Since there is some question as to whether Beverly Chase actually performed her own

music show *At We After at Perth*, the ratings she did, but admits to trying it out before an actual audience for two performances at the 1943 Theatre. "It was really a show rehearsal", she says. Apparently Beverly has made a cassette entitled *Some Arrived To Stay* for a new recording company. Pamphlet. And her play on the way from *Neil Simon* — *I Gotta Go To Be In Person* has a lot of force.

Apparently Kenneth Tynan is not getting complete co-operation from Laurence Olivier on the biography he is writing on one of the actor led. Since that Olivier is in the middle of writing his own book. Following Al Pacino's playing of Richard III in New York, other Hollywood stars seem set to jump on the Shakespeare bandwagon, Richard Gere, for instance, star of *Yards* and *American Gigolo*, is playing *Hamlet* in Los Angeles next October.

See old timers Mickey Rooney and Ann Miller are joining forces to star in a new musical technique called *Sage Ladies*. Wonder who will pick up the rights to the Broadway hit *The Elephant Man* apparently it is doing such terrific business, there are studios at every performance. Sandy Peterson, who has handled the publicity for so many international stars, is now extending her activities with opportunities to publicity consultants to Sydney's Boulevard Hotel.

The night following the opening of the best Clever production I have ever seen in Australia right up to the standard of the Moscow Arts Company version I can say I was looking forward to *Elephant Man* after, one of my favourite plays. But "Wonder whether it had the approval of Hople's current board director" Francisco Parlane.

Although it has been told many times, I do like that Mac West story concerning her comeback in the picture *Serpent*. Apparently the director rigged up a remote control device so that he could whisper the lines into her neck microphone so he heard through a tiny transmitter in the water. All seemed to go well until, in the middle of a scene, in her well known dress, Mac called "Can anyone take a client from *Delphic* to *Red Art*?" Apparently a local woman's radio had got tuned up with Mac's earpiece microphone!

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# LETTERS

Dear Sir,

I have carefully considered all the adverse critical reactions to my play, *A Moment Of French War* and feel disappointed that most of you have directed their comments not to the merits of the play, but to its appearances.

It is not a play about war or even, primarily, about men at war. Nor is it a play about homosexuality, least of all a crude attempt to shock. Nor is it a play about the Celtic heritage of Australia. Nor, for that matter, is any character in the play my mouthpiece. It is about the making of Australians in general, to show their feelings, sentiments and emotions free and natural play and expression. It is about the making of Australians, as represented by Barry Moon, the young Australian digger to cope with those aspects of human personality when they arise.

It is a flawed, first play, overwritten and at times of some structural modification, but it was not attacked mainly for these reasons. It was attacked, I feel, because its emotions and sentiments were asked and therefore confronting.

The fact that it was attacked in the way that it was distances, in my view, the theme of the play.

Yours faithfully,  
Clive Gorman

Dear Sir,

With reference to your list of Brecht productions in Australia, you might want to include the following (all in NSW):

- 1960 *The Caucasian Circle* Director: Brian Smith; Independent Theatre
- 1969 *Mother Courage* Director: David Goodland; Puppets Players for the North Side Festival
- 1971 *The Caucasian Circle* Director: David Goodland; Repertory 200
- also, the director for the New Theatre 1971 production of *Threepenny and Drums* was: Norman Gordon (not Nolan as printed)

Best wishes  
David Goodland,  
Bellaire, NSW

Dear Sir,

Many thanks for your comprehensive list of Brecht performances in Australia. As a student of German Literature and an avid Brecht fan, you include my own list for my thesis on Brecht, you include was most helpful. I have also noted a few productions of Brecht (mostly students) which did not appear on your listing.

- 1. *Real* was performed by an independent group at the Prism Factory, Back Theatre in late 1977
- 2. *Hagen*, *Real* was performed at The Hole in the Wall, WA, in February 1977
- 3. *Jaeger-Niederer* is currently being produced by the Arden Children's Theatre in Victoria.

4. *Moon in Moon* was given at Monash University in May, 1978

5. *Der Kleinhirnherkäufer* and two scenes from *Farber und Gend* "Der Spind" and "Die politische Frau", were performed at the Gold Theatre, Melbourne on University in May, 1979

6. The scene "Die politische Frau" and a reading of Brecht's poetry were given by the New Theatre, Melbourne, some time in 1977. I also have an idea that at some time they presented *Schwänke des Zwerger Wirtshaus*.

7. A dramatized reading of Brecht's poetry was given by Barry Blackmore at the Prism Factory, Back Theatre earlier this year.

8. *Der Tag Merkur von Strassen* was performed by the Russian Drama Group Yarnova in November, 1977.

Yours sincerely,  
Andrew Turner,  
Bentwood, Vic.

Dear Sir,

In thanking John Copeland for his generous review of *The Grand Grand Final Show* may I make three small corrections?

- 1. I never intended to imply that Australian students of drama should not study French (and/or Shakespeare). On the contrary, I believe that a study of the lyrics from which our modern drama developed is essential for drama students in. What I do believe, though, is that if we're to develop a genuinely Australian drama, it's essential to relate them to Australian culture — of which football is one part. In other words, drama students might not study French (and/or Shakespeare) if they're to be learning from the traditions of European drama. If they want to make a theatre that has something to say to most Australians, then they ought to be learning from what most Australians enjoy.
- 2. Neither did I intend to imply that we'd produced a theatre "as exciting as a Grand Final". I don't believe we did. But I do think we produced a theatre that was exciting for people who'd lost touch of their own country.
- 3. Rebecca Sumner does not exist. The Rebecca Sumner who does played a central part, along with Ray Monaghan and myself, in putting the football show together.

Yours sincerely,  
Albert Hunt  
Vigilant College of the Arts  
Melbourne, Vic.

Dear Sir,

COPYRIGHT ON SCRIPTS  
Recently AYPAA produced a handy Data copy of Play Scripts that underwrote in describe the content and location of Theatre in Education and Puppetry scripts.

I have written to a number of Theatre Co-

panies and to the Australian Council Libraries asking copies of some of these scripts. My intention was to put them in the College Library for access not only by students and staff but by the many teachers who use my Department asking for such things.

Most of the scripts are in typeset form. In some cases a copy is sent free of charge, in many cases we have to pay photocopying charges to the place of origin, and for enough use in a few cases (like Australia Council) the scripts are made available on micro-library loan.

My problem is that our Library will not hold scripts that have been photocopied so they then sit in a bin of copyright, and must have the author's permission to reproduce the script. With such permission obtained and someone to read the script then decide to stage a production, requiring multiple copies they would not agree to it — for copyright reasons.

This is not a problem of rights of performance which seems to me quite clear and unproblematic. Have you any suggestions (through your relations) as to how this impasse can be overcome?

Best wishes  
David Hough,  
Lecturer in Charge  
Speech & Drama, Mt Lawley C.M.E. W.A.

Dear Sir,

In the June 1977 edition of *Theatre Australia* you have listed British Brecht productions in Australia.

In addition to those listed, we advise that *The Caucasian Circle* was produced by The University of Adelaide Theatre Guild in 1978, directed by Ben Vile.

We hope that this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,  
John Edgar  
President,  
The University of Adelaide Theatre Guild

Dear Sir,

With regard to your request for mention of the passing away of one of Australia's great theatrical personalities, Mr James Pouch. The funds and work-a-mass would like to pay tribute to one of Australia's great Theatre Artists, Mr James Pouch of Morley W.A. who passed away 15th May, 1979.

Yours faithfully,  
B W Staples,  
Robert Staples and Associates,  
Secretary Makers,  
Theater 100, W.A.

Continued on page 72



## Carol Burns:

A thinking person's actor

### Suzanne Spinner

I spoke to Carol Burns over a happy sandwich lunch at the MTC studios in South Melbourne between rehearsals for *Real Fiyas* a *Grey's Anatomy* double for *Boys*. After the interview Carol and the rest of the cast were off to watch the main telenovela, at Capelle Road. For an actor in her early thirties — Carol Burns has had a remarkably career and varied career.

To start the year she has played the lead role of Frankie Doyle in the Ray Grundy's television action-thriller and has taken part in the ABC production, *The Grudge*. For MTC she recently played the part of Lenora in *Shores Across and The Man* — directed by Ray Lawler, and she is currently rehearsing for the Bruce Milnes production of *Real Fiyas*.

Makes many of her contemporaries Carol has studied drama formally but she also has 18-regulars. I was fortunate in that I was told such a number of different people who were all very interested as I was able to glean from them what I wanted. I did no work in of reading of scenes, but I think the most important thing, is that I pick bones from other people. The different things which you learn is that way are appropriate in different times. I think basically I am an associate actor but I am also a very rational person so I will let myself what I want to do and then if I go much I will draw on any one of the different techniques that I have learnt from.

Carol agreed that she was fairly relaxed but added that she sometimes worried that she was too relaxed and "It is the balance of person and intelligence that makes a good actor, and if you go too far in controlling what is happening to you, you run the risk of stopping the spontaneity which gives you the magic in performance."

I asked her if this season their particular companies had directors that were familiar to her career. Her response was a firm "Yes. — The present director in Australia is George Ogilvie and I had the good fortune to work with him for eighteen months in the South Australian Theatre Company — far closer to six months we did nothing but, sometimes, — on, always,



Carol Burns

sometimes, improvisation, — it was a terrific learning experience."

At the age of twenty-two, realising that she had only worked for state regional theatre companies, Carol decided that it was about time that she did some television. Her first television work was five drama series with the ABC. "I am also very glad that I started there because they have time to work with you as individuals and you have time at the studio, and as you usually do most series — see six parts — you've got a chance to investigate a character properly and learn the technique of the medium in which you are working. In the middle of the ABC series I did *The Migrant Ties*. What was so good about that was that we were on location for a month in Rockhampton and Geraldton and as there is nothing else to do in those places but work on the last days that I had off from outside filming, I joined the cast and they gave me a hat and I became little assistant to the director."

Next year Carol will be working as an associate actor with QTC. "It is one of the best of jobs that could be made in an actor in Australia as I will be choosing my own play and my own part. So I am mostly working alone because when you suddenly get presented with the world's literature to choose from, what do you pick?"

Carol stressed that it was important to realise the unique opportunities that working for the QTC had afforded her as the career of her career. "When the QTC first started it was a very isolated mine and nobody from down south wanted to work there because nobody had ever heard of it. I was doing things like playing Lady Chatterley in *The Railway Club* and *From an*

*Jane and the Parrot* and in the same year *Lies in Your A Good Man Charley Brown* — I had a most extraordinary range of parts to choose from and I had the opportunity to investigate the rules and do some of them moderately well, but to others and to trouble with a few — and all without the pressure of it affecting what anybody else in *From an* thought about me.

"Yes they were have heard something about me because when I came down south I had some sort of standing as an experienced actor rather than as coming straight out of drama school. But in choosing plays for next year I am a bit frustrated because QTC have already done some of the great things like *Mobile Clubhouse* and *The Seagull* and *Summer Planted Drama*. I'm looking to newer writings, maybe *What Your Regard* because either Elizabeth or Mary are great roles for a woman to play and David Hare's new plays *Plenty* and *Fourth and Sander* also interest me.

She acknowledged that there was a risk in choosing a new piece if you didn't do it well you were asking for audience and critics able to come down on you. Because the emphasis of the Australian public drama seems to be on working actors might feel as if you being criticised, they aren't interested in seeing an actor investigate a part. But in Queensland I have had a public who did follow me and who were really interested in coming along and seeing me at many different parts. That is no mistake which I think we as actors have a responsibility to promote in our public so that they become interested in you as a collection and more. The more staidate personalities is a critic in this country — most of the time it is mostly a review of a particular thing. What it should be is a criticism of one play that would and that critic's work on progress over the last five years or other words the particular should be put into some sort of context, because otherwise all you are doing is saying it's worth five books if you've got nothing better to do in the next 1000 words.

I asked Carol if she had any longings to do — She said that at present she was happy being an actor. "My overwhelming desire is to perform so it would probably make people perform the way I saw a part rather than allowing them their way — that is the great thing in acting I think is allow things to happen within a conscious intellectual framework. I think there is a great desire for the balance of that spontaneous thinking in an actor. In the course of our talk Carol discussed herself as "not a glamorous person" and a "thinking person's man". She is currently the lover and seemingly, perhaps, the foreign.

Youth ballet companies are too often children prettified for adulatory relatives. The Australian Youth Ballet is exceptional...

## Youthful Dancers Make Box-Office Waves

David K. Wheatley

Quite the darling of the Brisbane cultural world at the moment is a group comprising a 16-year-old Post Paper and 27 dancers, aged between 10 and 15 years.

The paper is Irene Seidler, a producer of The Australian Ballet School, a dancer with the Australian Ballet, P.C. Williamson and the New Zealand Ballet Company, and a lady who is rapidly building a reputation as a choreographer in Queensland.

Dancing is a rare almost inspirational art in Brisbane and the members of her Australian Youth Ballet Company.

Irene Seidler founded the company in July 1978. In those formative stages she joined the image of getting Sir Robert Helpmann and John Field, Director of the Royal Academy of Dancing, as patrons for her company. That same year the first audience was held to select 27 dancers from the 227 who auditioned. Irene Seidler was assisted by a very prestigious selection panel: Marilyn Jones, Gary Norman, Valerie Roberts, Ross Harrison.

The group first performed as a company in St John's Cathedral in Brisbane in November 1978. For this, Mrs Seidler choreographed *Swan Lake*. She then took the company to various national dancing centres where they performed *Az off now for fun*. That initial public reaction was sufficient for Irene Seidler to take very close note further. The company went into rehearsal for an inaugural season in 1979.

That first season in May at the Twelfth Night Theatre was a disaster in itself. The critics wrote scathing reviews and word went out that the company was no good. All the seats sold quickly. Hundreds were turned away. Not surprisingly a was followed by a second season in June. This time — added further to the cap — an invitation for the company to perform in Adelaide next year in an international Youth Festival.

"Pretty children? Yes, yes! Pretty children! But all good boy or girl. More than any company for Brisbane, dance looks like it. These or similar words in-depth the success of the Australian Youth Ballet. You then will get the explanation. What is it to the audience that Irene Seidler has carefully blended a winning combination of low office appeal with those choreography. After all, even dancing without music ever interested millions of all those pretty children. But it cannot be said to explain it to the success of the Australian Youth Ballet — after all 27 dancers you don't have sufficient relatives to make up those glancing audiences.

In the opening ball, Irene Seidler said the



Irene Seidler

company is doing to make a good job of being representative of this great world. It was at the time that it was the company in the world was considered. The second season, at the Twelfth Night, was a fairly predictable collection of poems, myths and songs while the third, *Swan Lake*, with great Company was a great success, contained translated work set to traditional English texts.

Aside from the unbalanced story of the young dancers, Irene Seidler's choreography, like the most interesting aspect of the programme. One of the problems of choosing ballet for children is that the dances must use the apt of the dancers. Irene Seidler explains: "Obviously you cannot have children performing in adult love scenes. Another problem is finding choreographers who can work with children — who can cope with the limited vocabulary of steps."

Irene Seidler went to develop that vocabulary by consulting the members of her company and processing their work, that is, more difficult than they would encounter in their

normal class situation. Overall, the aim is to place these young dancers' experience in the performing role of dance as a complement to their study of technique.

Many of these children will not go on to join professional dance companies as they grow older. They will grow to be too tall too short, too fat. The Australian Youth Ballet gives these people a chance to add performance skills to their study of technique.

One could also add that the company will provide a valuable training ground for those who want to become professional performers.

There dancers are trained on a professional approach to their work that they learn to work as a company. There are no individual stars — all are members of a well disciplined team. Ultimately, Irene Seidler would like to see the company expand its activities into other media, although she is the first to admit that these are many problems to be overcome before this is likely to eventuate. This season she will be a help for the Australian Youth Ballet. There is a country tour of Queensland planned for July, 1980, a further performance in St John's Cathedral and then new works for several Brisbane seasons later in the year.

And after that all depends will be decided towards going to America — and a world tour, given Reinhardt's personal exchanges with the company, there will be plenty of support to help get them there.

After all, especially in a winter, and in the moment Irene Seidler and her company of young dancers are added very firmly into the company.

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Still young in the entrepreneurial stakes, Malcolm Cooke, protégé of Kenn Brodzik, joins the big league... with commitment.

## Cooke's Cordon Bleu Tours

Ray Stanley

For a small, independent, commercial producer, in existence for only 18 months and not about to gamble on Australian projects, Malcolm Cooke is doing remarkably well.

Originally a school teacher, he played the juvenile in Thornton's *The Man of the Year* at the old Arts Theatre in Richmond, Victoria, for Joy Mudge and the late Philip Sawyers, with John Melbourne as lead, and in the early days he appeared in the *Consider Your Verdict* series.

"Then Kenn Brodzik, who was a good friend of mine, advised me if I really wanted to get into theatre, it should not be on the performing side. In those days there was no security in it, little chance of development, the community of producers was tiny there." Brodzik suggested if Cooke wanted to go into theatre, it should be on the management production side, although even then there was no security.

That is how it really all started. As soon as he met with the Education Department and set up the commercial with Artec Services as Brodzik's personal assistant, and then became manager, general manager, and a director. He was with Artec for nine years and says he learned everything from Brodzik. "I would discuss my self as his protégé and I hope that my efforts reflect how proud of what he taught me. I certainly have modelled my independent company on the original Artec Service, because Mr Brodzik created what was the most successful theatrical production company in the history of Australia. As a small independent with few overheads, he created huge profits for his shareholders."

There was many highlights for Cooke in the years he was at Artec. Above the first was the *Boomer* tour for which he was assistant tour manager. There (there was *The Black and White Musical Show*, which was enormously successful and ran for over two years. Perhaps his most exciting experience though was company manager to Marlene Dietrich, where probably he was closer to her than Brodzik himself.

After nine years Cooke left Artec services. "I was now an executive director, a shareholder, I owned the building, and it was only a small independent company, the only other place I could go was to become joint managing director." He put the proposition to Brodzik saying he would be willing to be the junior and not actually have joint control. Brodzik however, would not agree to this. In Cooke's words, he was "a benevolent despot" who had told my and several, and Cooke confesses that really this is the only way to run such an



Malcolm Cooke Photo: Frank Newsagency

independent company.

An Cooke went to Hollywood. Edward G. Ross, in joint managing director, but still retained an interest in Artec as a side line, and despite it a major success. From time to time he would produce Artec shows such as the musical *Two Goodwives of Venice*.

For the last years Cooke remained with Edward Ross the business grew from less to eleven million, making both partners wealthy enough to own Robin Hood. Then a point was reached whereby they were in conflict over which way the business should proceed, resulting in Cooke selling out to Ross. Not knowing quite what to do Cooke took a sabbatical for a year, and a new Mike Walsh who finally got him back into the theatre scene.

The latter had signed a contract with the New Network for *The Mike Walsh Show*, which has always been an enormous success. Walsh had long had an interest in live theatre, but not personal experience of it. "It was Mike who gave me the necessary stimulus and the feeling of not being on my own. Because I do like working with someone I like to be able to make all the decisions — but I like the feeling of support of having someone there to talk it all over with. Two brains are better than one."

Cooke went off overseas and secured the Australian rights of *The Kingfisher*. On another overseas tour, in New York, he happened to meet Sam Humphries in the foyer of a theatre, and suggested it was time Humphries did another show in Australia. *Act It Perfect: At His Age* became the first production to be jointly produced by Cooke and Walsh.

The Humphries show was followed by *An Evening With Quentin Crisp*, which Cooke now admits he handled wrongly. Crisp was over-promised, so that people felt they had been all but had to offer in advance into view, and the features in which Crisp appeared were made too

large. His effort was the show was a failure.

*The Kingfisher* with George Watters, John McCulloch and Frank Thorne finally cost, exceeded Cooke's expectations. Success had to be extended in Melbourne and Sydney and it went on to other unscheduled places and to return next year.

Cooke is particularly pleased with the success of *Robin Hood* as *A Star is Born*. He had never seen his perform but had heard all about her and was interested when she approached him with the show. "Now that we realize what a hit it is, we will probably expand the musical side of it and make it a bigger production or band."

"It shows that I like", stresses Cooke. "There is not time to get involved in shows that I'm not really interested in. I can physically only do a number of shows a year. I'd rather do shows that I believe in — that way I can sell them." So he is most happy about *Lillian Gish* coming out for him as *Lillian Gish* and *The Silver Mirror*.

As with Artec Services, Cooke has a small staff: a Melbourne manager, a Sydney manager and two more office staff plus people engaged for the duration of particular productions.

What sort of things can we expect from him next?"

"You can expect a major musical next year, a return role of *The Kingfisher* for those other states, and *A Star is Born* in 1980 hopefully to tour the rest of Australia. I don't believe there is a single commercial theatre going anywhere any more. I believe there is no audience for an attraction and you must know what your audience is and who the audience is."

If there were no subsidies Cooke does not believe there would be very much theatre going, he has not applied for one himself, but admits he deserves many things. "We now have the Adelaide Festival Centre and the Elizabeth Theatre. That very much on the commercial field with the benefit of their grants. That makes it hard for independent independent entrepreneurs to compete. They've got public money to put shows on with but I have a very good relationship with both, and as a number of my productions the AFTC has put on. That's a nice way of having this blend of grants and Government money."

And what about that Australian musical Cooke is working on? He refuses to be drawn too much into it. "It is a major project that is underway and being worked on now" he says. "It will be another world premiere, but it will not be a little Australian musical, it's a very major musical and will open on big musical comedy houses. It's very exciting."

It began as a social group...but is now looking to state or national status.

## Theatre of the Deaf

**Ian Watson**  
Artistic Director

The NSW Theatre of the Deaf is an award-winning year as a full-time professional Theatre in Education Company. This is an exciting challenge and important development for the Company, but one it is more than ready to meet.

The Company had its origin as the early activities under the guidance of the Adult Deaf Society of NSW (ADS) and, more especially, through the efforts of one of its Welfare Officers, Mr Nick Pirany, a man with experience of deaf theatre in England. In 1973 the Australian Deafblind Theatre Trust brought the famous American National Theatre of the Deaf to Australia and several of its actors conducted workshops with members of Spitzky's deaf community, and an idea was born. The Adult Deaf Society combined with the Deafblind Theatre Trust to set up the NSW Theatre of the Deaf in 1974 and employed an experienced theatre director, Adam Salzer, to coordinate its activities.

Under Salzer's guidance, the Company grew from what could only be described as a social group to one which now serves a very real need in the deaf community, as well as the community at large — mainly through the efforts of its Theatre in Education team. This development has been a relatively speedy one, but with patient guidance, careful training and a large number of performances including several major productions at the Seymour Centre in Sydney, the Company has more than proven its ability.

Earlier this year (1979) Adam resigned from the Company and I was appointed as the new Artistic Director in April. It is now up to me to continue the fine work Adam has done and to build on the foundations he has laid to consolidate the Company and provide the impetus for its further growth.

The Theatre in person consists of two companies: the full-time professional company made up of two deaf actors, one deaf actress, a hearing actress and a hearing production manager/director; and a much larger part-time semi-professional company consisting of fifteen deaf actors and actresses.

The first company tours schools, performing one production for primary schools *Mr Mouse In Four Colours* — a play commissioned by the National Parks and Wildlife Association dealing with the problems of pollution, conservation and rural animals and another for secondary schools, *Antony Speaks Louder Than Words* — a play concerned with communication, centred around the story of its inclusion for a film without words and hearing, in a language very

low physical action for the deaf, gesture, sign language, body language or whatever often communicate more than the spoken word. The concern with sound, as opposed to verbal, communication is quite obviously a large part of the Company's work, and in both plays a part of the production team is set aside for workshops which involve the children and allow them to capture visually as a means of communication.

This is quite apart from the intensive workshops conducted over an hour and a half wherein one of the actors works with a group of up to fifteen children and explores, in depth, the possibilities and range of vocal language.

Meanwhile the larger company is geared to performing for adults, for they in the deaf community, as the community at large, and over the years has received productions such as *Five Flights To Freedom Of Ropes and Chains*, *The Deceiver*, *Las Mls Mother Told Me King Lear* many of which have been performed in playscript which such as the *Black Panther* and the *Seymour Centre* in Sydney.

Both companies obviously share much in common, not the least of which is that broad audience appeal, and audience that means their productions are seen by an audience that is in the main, a hearing audience. This being the case, serious consideration is given to the sound track of all their productions for it is the area of special sound effects, and/or original music. To the end, the company employs a part-time musical director, Brian Smith who works closely with the music director and actors on each production. Brian's wealth of experience and his particular affinity with the deaf, their style of acting and their method of working has proved

an invaluable asset in complementing the uniqueness of the deaf theatre.

Deaf people have many problems directly related to their particular affliction, however as with many others who suffer a sense impairment, the other senses develop a compensatory factor. One aspect of the deaf is their heightened awareness and experience with visual and visual communication. The Deaf Theatre allows them an avenue whereby they can give other deaf people and more especially, the larger community of hearing people an insight into the unique talent.

We live in a visual age and theatre — especially in Australia including a few important exceptions — is a visual art. The theatre needs new ideas, new images and what better to provide that need than the very people whose world is visually vast — the deaf. Deaf actors have an approach to theatrical language which the theatre of the 1980's cannot ignore, with a combination of mime, gesture and movement they create a whole world, but unfortunately the does not necessarily mean the world of a Maresca, whose dialogue is forbidden, but one in which dialogue is formed with a form of communication that strips the verbal to its bare edge of poetry — a theatrical form that combines movement and dialogue into a new language all its own.

At present the Company works almost exclusively within schools and the deaf community, taking time to consolidate its formation as a Theatre in Education company, however in the latter part of this year and in 1980 we hope to expand our reputation and once again perform to adult hearing audiences. This does not mean our Theatre in Education work or our commitment to the deaf community will be less, both these areas are totally important to the theatre and the community at present. For example later this year we are hoping to be able to employ a woman musician for our TIE work. However, we are not to the principle of the company and the debt it owes the greater deaf community we must move toward a major music company, if not a musical company, committed to the unique form of theatre that only the deaf can manage.

The Deaf Community is justifiably proud of us because a theatre that has allowed them to share with other deaf people and capture to hearing audiences their talent and creative humanity has nothing remains more. We have many challenges ahead for the deaf and the hearing world who work with them — but the Company looks forward to those challenges in the 1980's.



Theatre of the Deaf in action.

Theatrical Suicide and Other Comic Matters.

# A-POLO GIES FOR MTC EE-ATS

Barry Dickins



"See, we invite the bloody proletariat in — and they don't understand us!"

I have been associated with La Morte theatre and the APG theatre and the gutter (one of the few remaining venues still relatively free of party favour and programming or political bias, but, of course, it won't be long before there are gutters in the ritual, those gutters, proletarianish gutters, a lot like gully trays, I guess, the way things are going) for a little over five years and have played to very poor houses in all these localities indeed, but making well equal my experience last October, when I played a drunken reading in Barry Dickins's *The Ship's Whistle*, when, at that reading, I played to seven people in the First Theatre of The Prison Factory. Actually, there was only four, but a long my grandmother Gertrude Dickins' birthday, I had taken her and her two sisters, Ben and Mabel, at 90 not out to the play that night, for a treat. A treat it was and they thoroughly enjoyed themselves, and were very happy with me, thinking I'd brought them to a reading, not having enough dough for a proper performance.

In the second last act, during the blackout, I lost my seat. I was obliged to go looking for them in my hands and times with a box of matches, but we did the play on a theatre

system, and they'd been run over by two tons of empty boxes on wheels, so I did the last scene properly, at which point they cry out and five two-tones brought paid naturally also properly. They were too old to dip the curtain rail, and after the performance I drove them home to their cottage in Thornbury, and we all had some stout beer and cups of hot tea.

Now, I love The Prison Factory, for many reasons, mostly for the wonderful fact that they state, that there is nothing like them anywhere at all, and that they promote and support culture like me. But the place has changed me life, and my mind (always partly suspect) is now a total weapon. I hardly use a typical program, or collective meeting with some slight theatrical exaggeration to make a good story a better one, but not much.

## A Collective Distille (or a Comedy William Mazzoni)

In Character      Wine about promotion for  
The Prison Factory  
2nd Character      Who came?  
Dickens      I can  
3rd Character      Get \*\*\*\*  
Character      10 10 10

Dickens

2nd Character  
Dickens

3rd Character  
4th Character  
5th Character  
3rd Character

Character  
1st Character  
2nd Character  
3rd Character  
1st Character  
2nd Character  
4th Character  
5th Character  
6th Character  
5th Character  
3rd Character  
3rd Character  
Character  
4th Character  
3rd Character  
2nd Character

Unless we promote, we die  
in the area  
Don't be scared  
You got an area, haven't  
you? Alan Dickins  
Get \*\*\*\*  
I'll record that.  
Who wants a number?  
The character smoked it  
all  
Get \*\*\*\*  
Where's Peter Corcoran?  
Drunk  
Where's his stage design?  
With Tindie  
Where's Tindie?  
With Corcoran  
Where are both of them?  
With Dickens  
Where are all of them?  
Drunk  
Where's Roscoe?  
You are Roscoe  
Can we talk about Fink's  
Shoe?  
What's the point?  
It starts tonight

3 0009 03337083 9

5th Character: How many bookings?  
4th Character: 200 weeks.  
3rd Character: Is Debbie bringing her graduation cap?  
4th Character: Maybe they can do front of house?  
5th Character: They're too old. He carries them up the stairs.  
1st Character: What play are we doing now?  
2nd Character: *The Jernan Cometh*. Kerry Dwyer's recreation of *and The Jernan Cometh*, with a cast of twenty learners.  
3rd Character: Haven't they been done?  
2nd Character: I don't think so. She's also changed the location from the USA to North Carolina, and written out of the Irish tropes.  
Character: It's because Ireland is next.  
2nd Character: No, not for that reason. It's too hard to do. Ronald ain't do it, and he is Irish.  
3rd Character: Alingo. It's been a look at the books. Yesterday our accountant drove his bike into a wall, so obviously there's a dollar somewhere.  
2nd Character: How much do we owe *The Australian* *Shed* Company?  
6th Character: Get \*\*\*\*.  
4th Character: Has anyone seen Michael Remy?  
5th Character: Nobody, not even Michael Remy.  
4th Character: *Dezmon Q' The Absolute* has 140,000 but was so progressive on one case.  
6th Character: You never come with me. Of course not, who wants the minority position?  
4th Character: The minority position is next.  
1st Character: *Fool's Silver Hand* is being done.  
2nd Character: There's five men and one woman.  
3rd Character: How come it's going on then?  
4th Character: We said we had a lot work.  
5th Character: Less work is next.  
4th Character: Debbie: well it's popular amongst average people (coughs).  
3rd Character: Let the MTC do it then.  
Character: They hate him. He looked under *Milk* *Her*.  
3rd Character: *Milk* *Wood*.  
Character: Get \*\*\*\*.  
2nd Character: It's Anna Jordan.  
3rd Character: Funny, Debbie is Jewish.

4th Character: It's Anna Jordan.  
5th Character: Why doesn't he support *Polished*?  
3rd Character: Or *Cher*?  
2nd Character: *Fool's Silver Hand* isn't funny.  
3rd Character: Funny for men.  
2nd Character: Not for women.  
4th Character: What's funny up the pole is certainly indulgent on the stage.  
5th Character: Jack Hibbert said that.  
3rd Character: What's Jack Hibbert?  
4th Character: Full back for Collingwood.  
5th Character: No, no, it's John Dalgarno.  
6th Character: Why's that?  
1st Character: When a ginger footballer has white *Dezmon*.  
2nd Character: What's that all about?  
3rd Character: The shoe trade.  
4th Character: Isn't that the one where a blacker member another trade in a pack?  
5th Character: No, that's *Zoo Story*, by Les Head.  
3rd Character: He runs the Karibilla Theatre, doesn't he?  
4th Character: Used to play tennis for Australia with Hayes Gordon.  
3rd Character: No, that was Wilfred Lee, Hayes Gordon wrote for the *Water Board*.  
4th Character: Well I remember that.  
5th Character: Isn't that a lot more, that last detail about the *Water Board*?  
6th Character: No red toppings and get anyway...  
Character: Look, I'm the choreographer here, you subscribe for improvisation.  
3rd Character: You're only the choreographer because you got the dogs man.  
5th Character: Let's move on, hey? We've produced seven businesses in a row. What do we do a return season of *The Jernan Cometh*?  
Character: *Cher*, you old.  
1st Character: Kerry hasn't finished writing it yet.  
2nd Character: The music of plagiarism, don't it?  
3rd Character: There's nothing wrong with the music.  
4th Character: But Eugene O'Neill wrote it.  
5th Character: But he was a man.  
Character: So naturally enough, it's next.  
3rd Character: John Rowland says *Fool's Silver* is history about.

Continued on page 14

CHRISTINE

# From

"After episode brought a new looker yet?"  
"No, and I'm not sure I'll get one. I'm told they're the mark of an experienced director, so I've cancelled an order."  
"Well I'm prepared to stand my ground...I thought I might get a gold plated one to hang around my neck — with certain photographs on it."  
"Fellas, Godard?"  
"You could put needles on it — one for each of your films?"

It's one o'clock on a dreary Sunday morning and a small crowd of excited Australians throng the entrance to a building together outside the Australian Film and Television School, waiting for the technicians to open the door.

It's the third day of a weekend workshop, ten theatre directors in the workshops of film production and direction. About once a month one of them are together in Sydney for seminars and practical sessions, preparing them to direct their first films later in the year.

Rex Crompton, George Blundell, Kerry Dwyer, Anne Moore, Nigel Triffis, George Whalley, Malcolm Robertson, Richard Wharmby and Mick Rodger were chosen from several sight applications for the course. There is obviously a lot of people in the entertainment business with their feet on the stage and their eyes on the screen.

At their first weekend seminar in April they met the producers and in May, they're home from the technicians. By the end of the year they'll be making twenty current films.



## KEY

1. Mick Rodger
2. George Whalley
3. Anne Moore
4. George Blundell
5. Malcolm Robertson
6. Kerry Dwyer
7. Rex Crompton
8. Richard Wharmby
9. Nigel Triffis

does not appear in the photo

Photo: Peter Hollmann

CHOFIELD reports on eminent theatre directors crossing the line

# Theatre to Film

Continued from page 10

It's a course organised by Gil Belsky, organised by Felix Overton and funded by the Australian Film Commission, with support and cash finance from a wide range of television, equipment hire firms and production houses within the industry.

In 1977, Gil Belsky put forward a proposal that the Australian film industry could be boosted by using the experience and expertise of theatre directors especially in the areas of scripting and performance. When he set out on most finance and support for his proposed course he found resistance from within the industry. It wasn't until Ken Wicks of the Film Commission gave them backing and financial support that Gil and the APTES were able to put the proposal into action.

**GEORGE WHALEY:** It's the gradual sort of opportunity that we need not film. The two assumptions on which the course was set up — that when the film industry needs its people experienced in working with actors and as new scripts, and that the theatre can provide them — are arguable, but I'm glad I'm one of them. It wasn't set up as for film directors, and probably to turn out apprentices we should do more than the one short film at the end of the course. I believe that the actor is the centre of the film and theatre industry, and having worked as a film

actor I know the sort of rough deal an actor gets there. It's not always a case of actors being misused, but at the same time rehearsal does etc. but theatre director's major work is with scripts and actors, and perhaps we can make that side of it more efficient.

It's easy to see why there would be resistance to the scheme, from an industry in which almost every pulpit and best boy is a frustrated director, working his, or her, way up from the bottom. And those who have made it to the director's chair aren't willing to make room for someone who walks in with a gold-plated new finder and government money paying his way. Very few people who have worked their way up The Hard Way are prepared to find generous toward someone who has had it easy. Even those who had it easy on their day seem to have forgotten the help they had so far earned and they want yet another scheme to keep an extra people to compete for jobs. Why don't they lay behind the footlights and let the real film makers get on with the business of trying to crack the American market?

But perhaps Gil Belsky is right, or at least has found a partial solution to the continuing inadequacy of Australian film. It seems that film makers, or at least many of them producers like their creative decisions a strategy, rather than on real knowledge. They tend to go for real results, mistaking the superficial ingredients of success, rather than looking beneath the surface

to see what it is that appeals to people's emotional needs.

It takes a certain amount of clairvoyance and capacity with people, to understand what is going to grab them and make them want to see a film. Movie going is an emotional experience. But it seems that most films made in this country lack emotional involvement. First, the emotional involvement of the people making them, resulting in a lack of emotional connection with the audience. Our films are like art, kept in glass bellows films.

**BOB CRAMPHORN:** It solves the problem that I've been trying to solve for years. I want to America to do a similar course, but a didn't work out. It's so hard to make the transition from film to theatre; as one believes you can do a small job here the product. We're getting the best people will think to talk to us, but of course, the practical work is the best. We probably won't end up in a position to operate a camera etc. — all it can be is an introduction to the technology — but we will know enough to talk sensibly and would thoroughly have the opportunity to make our own film.

Avoiding or suppressing all expression of feeling is a national characteristic. We speak of emotions, but they have not now and then in a small display of violence, usually behind the

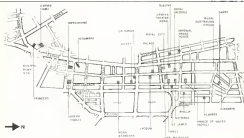
Continued on page 33



Sydney has lost dozens of theatres over the past 180 years. Here TA continues its occasional series by the acknowledged authority on Australian theatre buildings.

## Ross Thorne: The First One Hundred Years SYDNEY'S LOST THEATRES

### PART ONE



PLAN OF SYDNEY SHOWING LOCATIONS OF THEATRES

In the last 180 years Sydney has seen, in what we now call the Central Business District, some two dozen locations of theatres, excluding the Opera House complex. On two of these sites there are now new theatres, the only remaining commercial houses still existing from Circular Quay to Central Railway, from Darling Harbour to Hyde Park. These two theatres, the Royal and His Majesty's (formerly Transport) deserve and will receive a more detailed description in a future issue of *Theatre Australia*.

The first lost theatre was not Sydney's first chance for continuous commercial performances. It was, according to David Collins, built by "some of the more decent class of prisoners". It was opened on 16th January 1789 by the convicts who had "filled up the house with more theatrical property than could have been expected, and their performance was far above contempt." It is generally believed as Robert Selwyn's theatre, he being either the prime mover or its establishment owner or manager.

There is not complete agreement as to what (Bell Row, High Street, or High George) Street

near Jamison or Hunter Streets are given by various authorities. Occasional performances were held until the arrival in 1803 of Governor King who objected to the alleged shows which resulted from an establishment. (E.g. Convicts stole from houses while the occupants were attending the theatre.) Coming one hundred years on it would have been a rather primitive

corner slab-sided small hall or shed with perhaps a rapped floor, behind the bar there would be the "front box" over or behind which commenced a gallery.

The first "permanent" theatre to be built had a considerable history by any standards. Originally built on the second level of a brick fine stony great warehouse in 1826 by Thomas Levy, the



Royal Victoria Theatre, Pitt Street (1838)  
Perspective reconstructed from contemporary sketches





Queen's Theatre, York Street. The hotel in front of the auditorium was built prior to 1870.

Theatre Royal was not to open as a permanent theatre until 1833. The building, sometimes ironic events carried on a rotating wheel scale with Governor Darling in his effort to obtain a licence for the theatre for construction the Hotel Royal facing the warehouse in George Street, was made bankrupt and it was left to the mortgagees, the new owners, to find architect-builder John Young reconstruct the theatre, now on two levels of the warehouse. It contained a pit and three tiers of galleries, the galleries, double circle and gallery, the proscenium contained doors onto the stage area in the conventional Georgian Regency style of the day.

The Royal existed as Sydney's only theatre for five years, in 1838 Joseph Wyatt, landholder, built the first large theatre, one which would have been the envy of a major provincial English city. Levey's Royal burnt down in 1846 leaving the new Royal Victoria on Pitt Street without exception. But this was not to be long. Again,



Hippodrome, Campbell Street (1916). Long section showing auditorium and stage.

From the theatrical marketplace, Wyatt, there was a number of actors who took up theatre management for periods in the capital cities and occasionally toured the country. Simon Cameron was known in Sydney, Hobart and Melbourne, and Central Knowledge also arrived frequently. The last named was to take over the Australian Olympic Theatre in Hunter Street some after its prospects received its first theatrical licence on January 25, 1863. The first half of the theatre has consisted was the beginning of a line of various amphitheatre type buildings culminating in the Hippodrome built by the City Council for White firm, across entrepreneurs in 1910 outbreak as the Capital cinema in 1913/16.

The Australian Olympic Theatre was built more than an elaborate vast draped inside with decorative fabric and it by gas. Across the circle used for aquatic events with a pit raised and hoisted, a small stage was raised on in the proscenium, all much the same as the first ordered amphitheatre built by Philip Aubrey in London in the late 18th-century.

Knowledge returned to the Royal Victoria two months after Manager Joseph Simonson, attempted to break Wyatt's monopoly at the "Va" He opened a one level theatre, probably as a small warehouse, at Market Street in May 1841. By July, after installing a second tier of boxes the proprietors were motivated. The Royal City Theatre remained licensed for plays and entertainments until May 1850 for performances, if any, were rarely advertised it was occupied by a furniture warehouse which vacated the premises for one week only in 1856 for the purposes of "Grand Musical Extravaganza".

From mid 1843 the theatrical monopoly remained with Wyatt and his associates at the Royal Victoria, with the exception of a few houses and halls and hotels being used for musical and general entertainments until 1855 when Wyatt built the Prince of Wales theatre recently known as the Theatre Royal in Castlereagh Street. His former "Old Va" as it became affectionately known, was a very important theatre in Australia. It was the first large theatre, having a brochure three stately Georgian style facade to the fronting hotel, the auditorium was Regency style, all with doors in the proscenium but with five distinct levels of audience until 1865 when it was reconstructed more sparsely with three levels. The stage was large being extended to a depth of 160 feet a few years after its opening. Fire destroyed it in 1880 leaving Sydney with three theatres: the recently rebuilt Royal in Castlereagh Street, a pair, cramped theatre in York Street and an even smaller one in King Street at the York Street corner.

The theatre in York Street was commenced by John Makin as an unexcited venue for "horseman, burlesque and rope dancing" in the part behind the Adelaide Hotel in 1850. The patrons were presented in makeshift type accommodation appended to the rear of the

Royal Victoria along the accommodation to be extended around the sides of the performing surface which was raised at the same time in 1857.

In the next year a stage was added thereby creating a more change from the Royal Australian Circus to the Royal Australian Amphitheatre. By 1854 Malcolme had leased it to the Theatre Royal Lyceum after the arena had been converted to form a pit. The theatre however suffered misfortune and Malcolme was back again in 1856 providing aquatic performances. In the same year it returned to human theatre with George Coppin, later one time partner of George Coppin, retaining the theatre in his theatrical sides. The building had been reconstructed completely providing three levels of accommodation. But in 1857 it returned to becoming the Olympic Circus, then there followed a stream of it being a ballroom.

In cheapened street continued thus with a variety of uses and name changes (Multiple in 1869, City Chameleon in 1871, Theatre Royal in 1872) until the title of Queen's was settled upon it.



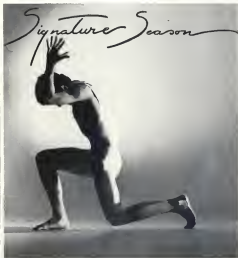
Imperial Opera House, King and York Streets in 1882.

In 1873 Two years later it was refitted for the opening of Street Oil with J.C. Williamson and his wife Maggie Mason. Their first season at the theatre was so successful for Sydney the 160 year old association was the management organisation affectionately known as The Firm.

The Queen was condemned as a house to human life and closed in 1880. Half of black towards the harbour front existed from 1879 the city's first Sydney Opera House initially titled The Imperial Opera House. The small auditorium was in a very modern building above a series of back up shops facing King Street. Upon its opening the Sydney Morning Herald welcomed the lack of a gallery "stepping about and the showmen of playbills and more objectionable things which we have experienced in other houses are impossible here". It was used for musical comedy and as its overflow house, Capper's company moved into it briefly when the forced a cut of the Victoria in 1890.

Part two of this look at Sydney's lost theatres will be appearing in the September issue.

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## PROGRAMMES:

### Programme 1

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The Parts of Pauline

Aug 10-11 (Mon & Tue) 12, 22, 23, 28

### Programme 2

Shenandoah • Designs • Kristian Fredrikson

• Randolph Haverst • Spiritalism • Signatures

Aug 14, 15, 16, 17, 25 (Tue), 27, 29, 31

### Programme 3

Glimpses • Regale • Toccata per le diuie

Sequences VII: Signatures

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# DO WE NEED A.R.T.S.?

PEOPLE  
BIG  
BUSINESS  
AND THE ARTS

## What is A.R.T.S.?

"Arts Research Training and Support Ltd (A.R.T.S. Ltd) a permanent National Non-profit Organisation Sponsored by the Private Sector is set for Arts in Australia."

"In June 1977 The Hyer Foundation published a report titled *Building Private Sector Support for the Arts* — a review of the economics of the Arts in Australia with recommendations relating to private sector support. A group of fifteen business and other people, from throughout Australia, had worked in a voluntary capacity to prepare the report...The report identifies three areas where the private sector could help the Arts in Australia.

1. **Research and Consultancy** by bringing commercial problems solving approaches to the Arts and its major institutions
2. **Management Training** by helping arts organisations to develop their financial, marketing and administrative skills
3. **Support and Sponsorship** by getting their own money on behalf of artists and arts groups in seeking private sector funding and assistance in kind.

"In August 1977 A.R.T.S. Ltd was incorporated in New South Wales. Dr Timothy Pascoe, who had drafted and prepared the original report in a voluntary capacity, had subsequently carried out the various boundary assignments was asked to become the National Director of A.R.T.S. Ltd."

*A.R.T.S. Ltd First Annual Report*

## How Does A.R.T.S. function?

In August 1977 the Lush Foundation agreed to fund the legal and office establishment costs of A.R.T.S. and its operating expenses to the end of 1977 — \$28,800. From August '77 to June '78 A.R.T.S. received \$41,544 in donations and \$54,853 payment for "fees and reimbursement of expenses for research, consulting and administrative training". In total its "costs of services required by the arts and administration" is \$129,444.

The *First Annual Report* states "We made no charge for our consulting — the donations we receive from our own supporters make it possible for us to retain those artists, art groups or their own line of charge.

"We do not raise money on behalf of artists or art groups. We want them to learn how to do it and we want them to establish their own, on some relationship with donors.

In A.R.T.S. creating the constant business problem of the middle man? Are the services of A.R.T.S. equal to \$14,000 difference between donations to the company and "services" provided for arts organisations, when the other \$41,544 of donations could perhaps have been channelled directly to arts organisations? Is A.R.T.S. necessary?"

## Who is Timothy Pascoe?

Dr Pascoe is extremely well qualified in the areas of economic, commercial and business administration. His qualifications include a Ph.D. and MBA from Harvard and a M.A. in the field. But he is well set up as a management consultant. His is what may be his particularly qualified in the arts field? He describes himself as having "a good lawyer's knowledge of the law" and in the field of art administration staff "once produced and devoted a large a collector."



Dr Timothy Pascoe Pascoe: New Zealand

Arts organisations have often used ordinary management consultants in the past, with some success. Does Dr Pascoe's company have anything in particular to offer to the art? Does it make sense for A.R.T.S. to be the recipient of money earmarked for the arts from the private sector?

## What has A.R.T.S. done?

1. **Research and Consultancy** "A.R.T.S. offers commercial research and consultancy skills to arts organisations and funding institutions."

A.R.T.S. has undertaken various reports for Government bodies like the Governors of the Adelaide Festival Centre, the Arts Development Division (Premiers Department SA, Treasurer of the National Gallery of Victoria and the Victorian Ministry for the Arts. These organisations are charged the full range of research and consulting. Dr Pascoe and A.R.T.S. take the attitude that "with these major organisations there is the capacity to pay", he also says generally "if they're paying money they'd pay more attention."

For the Victorian Ministry for the Arts in A.R.T.S. report undertook to "identify key areas concerning the current availability and future allocation of arts resources in country areas of Victoria". The final report came up with a series of questions about the arts in country Victoria which Pascoe describes as setting up a structure on which the Ministry can build its approach, but it must then find its own answers to the questions the report raises. A member of the Victorian Ministry for the Arts noted that "many of the problems raised in the report have been known in the Ministry for some time to its own experience."

Is the value of such a report questionable? Is A.R.T.S. specifically qualified to carry it out? Is it possible that such a company — the only company that calls itself an Arts Management Company — is taking work from local companies who may be better equipped to themselves on both specific and local issues than an outsider? Is such a company processing arts funding organisations from questioning their own research and support channels?

2. **Management Training** "A.R.T.S. Ltd runs seminars and courses to help smaller arts organisations sharpen their general management skills."

# BIG BUSINESS AND THE ARTS

In September 1978 A.R.T.S. ran a two-week course in Sydney for senior arts executives in general management.

The cost of the course was \$1,000 all in, of which about 60% was for residential costs, another 40% covered fees of the director — Eric Barker — and other specialists, and 20% was for accommodation. About 25 people attended and Tim Pascoe says "we worked them hard".

Michael Fitzgerald, who attended the course for the Australia Council, thought that overall it was an excellent idea given the shortage of chairs and arts administrators, but felt that the course could be improved upon. Two weeks was too long, and there was too much theory and not enough practice. The people who attended were so widely dispersed in terms of experience that some went out of their depth from the start, while for others it was preaching to the converted. The particular course should have been for junior arts executives, rather than senior, and the lecturers — though some were very good — could have been more carefully selected for suitability.

Alan Pascoe, now at NIDA, felt that the main value of the course for him was the meeting of people in different areas of the arts. His main criticism was that many of the senior arts folk had little understanding of the difference between running a big business and a theatre company or an gallery. A lecture on marketing and promotion helped in terms of hundreds of thousands of dollars for promotion and when queried about smaller amounts related to the size of revenue, replied that the arts was a dying business.

Another seminar arranged by A.R.T.S. was the one day seminar for managers of arts magazines. Dr Pascoe says he was approached by the Australia Council to organise a seminar together of small, funded magazines to find some mutual self-help although most of the magazine personnel who attended were strongly under the impression that it had been Pascoe's idea, sponsored by the Australia Council. The Council paid A.R.T.S. \$4,000 for the seminar, but Tim Pascoe's time was given gratis. The money went to pay postage for two weeks work of analysing the statistics called from a questionnaire filled in by the magazines on basic facts about print runs, sales figures, subscriptions. Eventually the analysis got in on course, as the right hours remain was delayed for a couple of hours while final figures were completed.

Although most of the small magazine editors or managers agreed that a had been of general use to go together and discuss mutual problems, what resulted from the seminar?

A committee was formed, but "I don't know

what it happened to it. Everyone got too busy — we're all too bloody busy — nothing has really happened. We had the seminar and then a couple of meetings, one with some discussion follow, but nothing came of that. We applied to the Council for \$10,000 for post promotion and nothing came of that" — Sam Smith, Fine Arts Press.

Aquil Hamey of Craft Magazine found it "very successful on the personal level but not successful for some. What I find in Pascoe's shows below is those overhead topics with breakdowns of statistics etc, no doubt useful, and part of the management technique, but tedious in fact we all wanted to talk to each other".

Again are A.R.T.S. the right people to hold such seminars? Arts company management and magazine publishing are very different and require specialist knowledge rather than a general business approach. Should education or ex-theatre administrators be left in professional training establishments like NIDA? The Australia Council are worried by the amount of money they are pouring into magazines, do they not have their own specialist system for monitoring and aiding the progress of publications? Is it perhaps strange that the Council should encourage and fund such a seminar that report its results in the form of a grant for post promotion from the magazine. Could A.R.T.S. be providing an easy way out of such problems?

3. Support and Sponsorship: "A.R.T.S. Ltd recruits artists and arts organisations on how to support their approach in companies and community groups for financial and other sponsorship of their activities".

In its *First Annual Report* A.R.T.S. shows advice to eighty unselected individuals and groups with several much-needed questions in print at the company, and notes that there

advice is now available in booklet form. (The booklet *Approaching the Private Sector for Support* with itself) doesn't advocate fees from the side of the angels? No instance of subsequent success is reported.

The second facet of support activity is speeches and fund raising: the third *Annual Report* for Financial Support of the Arts ("During the first half of 1978 we committed considerable time to planning and seeking sponsorship for a scheme of Awards to recognize outstanding examples of business support for the Arts". When Dr Pascoe was asked if the inception of the Awards had helped bring donations to the arts, if there were any specific instances that he knew of, he said "No. It's situation not companies that is important, a question of climate making and I think it has done that." A paradox — *Awards* from the business world to fund a scheme which congratulates them for making donations?

What then is the role of A.R.T.S. as business, together business and the arts? Two link-ups which are a direct result are that the Myers Foundation, well almost certainly be helping a group of Aboriginal dancers, and that Hume has drawn Hough's free cartoon to help raise funds for new seats in the Perth, who asked as the small magazine wonder what advice he could offer, what approaches he could suggest, whether he would participate in future discussions. Dr Pascoe said no, he was only there to bring them together. "It is a co-opsis" is such a useful acronym?

Is A.R.T.S. Ltd simply a catalyst, and is it necessary in the current era situation? Can the arts afford to sustain a realisation that has popped between the private sector and their hopes? Are the grants going to A.R.T.S. adequately passed on in value, as money, to the arts themselves or would it result in more go directly to them without outside interference?

There is no doubt that the commitment of Timothy Pascoe and the others involved to A.R.T.S. is great, and genuine, but it is debatable as to whether such work is suitably channelled under current circumstances. Obviously there is a need for greater communication and mutual dependence between the worlds of business and arts, but it is satisfactorily done by forcing the two onto uncomfortable ground?

The situation could arise when A.R.T.S. is providing the private sector with an appropriately named, but safely responsible pane for a conservatively funded, and government funding bodies with an equally responsible and suitably costly shelter on which to couch off resistant problems.

Dr Pascoe says "we'll run for as long as we get positive feedback, if we go down all we can in five years' time we can go out of business". A healthy attitude from his side, but A.R.T.S. may become a temporary presence in which people with funds must become addicted. It might be too late when it is seen that the price of comfort was depriving the arts body of its blood.



Help Hough put seats under him and thereby get him on stage.



Journal: *Journal of Management* (1998), 24(1), 101-110

## An undoubted success

## WIND IN THE WILLOWS

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Journal compilation © 2007 Blackwell Publishing Ltd

**What's in the Wilderness:** The Agave Cemetery at Calles y Sierrita Hill, Calaveras County / May: Choose Your Wilderness... Lightning Design: Ben Williams, Jason Jones, Thomas Soderlund / Image Manager: Julie Wachs. Minor corrections and updates: Ricki Stone.

**Authorized by the Company:**

Mike	Ron	Perry	Dan	Jennifer	Brenda	Sandra	Nora	Faye
Tina	Maureen	Wendy	Wanda	Robert	Blairwood	Chris	Debbie	
Chloe	Linda	Betty						

(Continued)

The strength of *Wind* as the Willows is not in its plot: the Trout's faith in boats and gyppies carries on and last cars are certainly the famous incidents and the Battle for Trout Hill is certainly the most exciting, but they are not the heart of the story. *Wind* is the Willows is an environmentalist's novel. The things that really matter in the book are Malt's unaccompanied journey for his finally truly underground house, that quiet but back unsparingly as matter how strong the counter map of adventure, the Rialto-occupied advocacy of the arts of life on the river, meaning about its house, and Rialto's pride in his warriors that be associations of the

locations, whose friends stretch to the very edges of the Wild West. Only Mr. Tread has lost or denied his place in the natural order, and he is as certain as they come and gets himself and his friends into all kinds of trouble by his insistence on remaining in the affairs of men.

Beyond it all, ruling the whole grand scheme with his master in the Pigeon all the Gates of Dawn Pan, "the spirit of Nature who watches (immediately) over the graduate" world, and keeps it from being broken.

Stripped of all this, the pilot gets a lot faster. Mr. Tread is sent into jail for one year, he saves himself and makes his way home so fast that the Wrench has taken over Tread Hall, he and the War, the bike and the Dodge get the Redies a good shoving and now Tread Hall back.

The Agnew Company's adaptation had so much more than a kept the undevoted attention even of the young of the television generation. But it kept their attention in the way Bugs Bunny does, the play itself was stark and two-dimensional, full only of accident and lacking the love and mystery and understanding which were the strength of the novel. Most importantly, the Battle for Tomb Hill became simply a battle of the Goodies against the Badies, despite the selfish reasons instead of being part of a natural struggle for existence.

Belong to the 1000th Anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China

and none of it was in the script for the production. But it was everywhere in the music. If the Paper in the Gates of Dawn had heard Linda Perry playing her own music, he would have stopped her up at any price to write him scores for films and to become someone when he was looking off colour. With pipes and pants and thought and cello and drums and piano and drums, and the distant strong board of an old piano she made such eerie soundings and thumpings and clappings and toings and rappings that she stopped all the music and wonder that could have been written for in the script. Her music was as wild and sweet and random as the wind on the coveyhouse.

Undoubtedly there are children who dislike having an older sister who also does. Undoubtedly also that *Wind in the Willows* is highly emotionally charged, and removing the rest and romance from it could be seen as a prosa-worthily exercise in denaturing. *Australian* like denaturing. *Wind* *Australian* plays which succeed here are down to earth, no-sentiment pieces of life in and life in current denaturing. As Sandra Ashlock said in *Theatre Australia* last year, *Australian Theatre* includes **WOMEN**. Women and bank are not the same thing.

The only real fantasy left in the script was the fact that animals were talking and acting just like people, but technically the production was full of minor miracles. The scene was a brilliant but cliché sequence stretching from song to song. Flipped by two pairs of hands invisible in the wings, it opened and flowed, and then it rose on its side as food fell (apparently, to swallow the food and the Rat and the poor Mole who couldn't swim). The almost humanesque forest backdrop which changed from a boggy field to the temples of the Wild Woods, with several layers of giant petals for growing food and holding behind worked masterfully, and was full of mystery. Later, with windows projected on it, the backdrop was the Great Hall of Tread Hall. The whole showed extraordinarily good co-ordination of lighting and set design. Mr. Rader's make-up and the make-up of the company's handsome lead women were remarkably attractive.

Characterizations needed to be a bit shaky, because the characters are defined in the context by their relationship to their environment, and the positions of heart that they showed by leaving their homes for Trud's sake. None of this went into the script, so the actors and the director did not have a great deal to work on. Nevertheless, the music, the set and the lighting contributed to much drama, and the plot so much adventure, that the production was an unqualified success.



Frances Dowling — comparatively brilliant as Sally

## Witty but mundane A HANDFUL OF FRIENDS

MARGUERITE WELLS

*A Handful of Friends* by David Williamson. Canberra Repertory Theatre 3-4 October. 30 July to 14 July 1977. Director: Robert Fisher. Set Design: Ronald Brown. Costume Design: William Newman. Lighting Design: Wendy Brown. Stage Manager: Pat O'Leary. Robert McLennan (John Lee), Wynne (Wynne), Patricia Kelly (Jill McArthur), Les (Margaret Kelly), Marshall (Gordon Darling), Mark (Michael), Bernard (Giles). Professional Theatre production.

Watching a Williamson play I always have the uneasy feeling that I am not supposed to be in a theatre at all, that I should be in, for instance, watching a car accident. There is, after all, no real need to see the bodies of these talking heads on feet. In the sort of things they're saying, each clever change of costume would be much more satisfactory.

It would also, in this case, save the set designer a many-headache. Two thirds of the action takes place in the McArthur lounge room, a quarter in their sayer in law's flat, and the remainder in a mood room. Such a very real play does require

three real rooms, but there are three to be found only in a commercial garden house? The main motif of the Theatre 2 stage broadly an unspoken problem was here an advantage. The McArthurs even pay a huge and chaotic dining room which most of the audience couldn't see into. But then they weren't supposed to see into it because nothing was happening in there. But then if it wasn't really needed, why put it there in at all? Steps are usually seen on the edge of a spotlight.

The McArthurs' windy living room with its goldenrod fish-coloured standard lamps and its South American wall hangings would certainly be a nice place to live in for those who are given to glowering fish-coloured standard lamps, but the set as a whole looked promising for all but the two minutes or so of the play that took place in the mood room. For those few minutes only, it was a whole. Television could readily have solved the problem of two thirds of a stage being off for two thirds of a play.

Williamson's witty lines certainly sent the audience away with a chuckle and a spring in their step. "She was a lesbian, but she was trying to become a lesbian — there is certain action of the women's movement that supports it on

ideological grounds." "The film has been derived for the moment, but it's expected to be brought back when the public taste has caught up with it." These lines brought in one very vulnerable target and threw it to his. Even badly delivered, such lines would be expertly funny.

Frances Dowling as the cowardly thief and Sally, awfully tough and self-righteous Sally Marshall, gave an excellent performance which by contrast with the rest of the cast showed up as brilliant, the ladies in particular were prone to mouthing and grinning and giving reactions of the London School of Music type. It was allowing for a certain degree of differentiation over lines that were well worth getting over clearly, the first half of the play was affected with some memorably outrageous moments, which disappointed in the latter half as the audience got used to the actors' style and the actors got used to having an audience.

The play does not lend itself to varied interpretation. There is one obvious way of presenting these fairly sad Australians living fairly real — albeit lonely — Australian lives. It was therefore an extremely unimaginative and orthodox production. Part, at least of the reason for the play is the mouth delivery, was that in moving about "real" living rooms, sitting papers and shuffling books and putting on records, and but to concentrate so hard on getting the right verbal intonation in the right place — and there has to be plenty of verbal intonation because all of the interesting action of the play is in the lines. It is a thoroughly non-visual play.

People really do seem to enjoy seeing themselves, or preferably people they know ridiculed or glorified or simply analysed on stage. I can never rid myself of the suspicion that this is because we have no insight into our own lives unless we see them deliberately shown before us in the form of a work of art. We then sit back and watch a mechanical analysis of contemporary society, which is not really so different, and which wouldn't be needed in at all if only we kept our eyes open as we wander through the world. I can't help thinking, as I watch Australian Lounge Room Comedies like this one, that the stage was never for grander writers, Macbeth more brilliant things than this. For things that celebrate and uplift the imagination.

This was not a living production. It was not unfairly, it was not desecrative or unimportant. But it was mundane, because the play was mundane and the play was mundane because the audience was mundane and that is how everyone seems to like it.

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Robbie Lamb (above) and Felicity Newbould (below) in *Debut*

## A confidence trick

### TRIBUTE

JOHN McALLUM

*Debut* by David Hare. Peter Williams. Productions in association with the MLC Theatre Royal Company. Theatre Royal Sydney 1994. Opened 16 June 1994. Director: Peter Williams. Designer: Larry Leonard. Production Manager: John Williams. Lighting: Roger Pheasant. Cost: Sarah. Music: Roger. Dialects: British. Designer: John Leonard. Properties: Robbie Lamb. Set: Susan Johnson. Sound: Michael. Stage Manager: John. Production: David Thompson. Two the better. Sydney: New South.

*Debut* is a confidence trick in the tradition of *The Goodbye Girl* and *The Glass Menagerie*. It uses a touching subject, generally believed to be important, to deliver a cynically deconstructing public and corrupting social commentary as true feeling, and such artificial philosophising as results. The play has to claim credit for the genuine feelings aroused by the subject, but offers nothing of its own.

It is about a really nice guy who makes even poor feel happy when he is around, but who completely fails to care for or control himself in the love game, who feels, painfully, that they have more control than he has. The story that he is dying of cancer enables him to control his wife at the dramatic hour — on the night of the performance in fact, which is framed as a tribute to his birthday. The confidence play has become the principal characters give touching speeches and tell touching anecdotes, and at the end he and his wife kiss and make up.

In fact it is the audience's sympathy which finds this subject as the first place. So much is the author on manipulating their emotions from moment to moment, that often the thread is lost completely. In the search for moments of *Aspirin Affirmations of Life*, *Moving Mountains* from the Past, and so on, my trust is lost. The philosophising is strictly phoney because it is

designed to tug at the audience's heartstrings rather than reveal the character.

The weakest character is the son, whose extreme and violent reactions to precisely everything on stage seem to be caused by nothing at all. It is his playing the passions of the Madhouse over the fact that he was a man the time. Thus some of the moments do work like the son trying to understand his father at the only way he can, by photographing him, and that in the production an able and brave to make many of the play work, two main weaknesses only undermines the overall quality and self-indulgence of the stage.

The confidence trick is compounded by the ending of a much loved performance. Robbie Lamb is the father. When I saw the play, an awkward and slow police officer drew a standing ovation at the end — a tribute in itself to the power of such a star to make a play like that a worthwhile experience in the theatre.

## GALLIEO

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Left: John Cooke. — Spartan: Right. David Hinchelwood — Cook.

## DEPARTMENTAL

### GLITTER, NOBODY

*Department* by Murray Ballentine. The Stage Company at Belconnen Theatre, Acton, SA. Started June 7. July 1, 1979. Directed: Geoffrey Bellchiff. Cook: David Hinchelwood. Spartan: John Nally. Pyre: David McIlveney. Audience: 270.

With eleven people in the audience the Stage Company actors might have been forgiven for merely going through the motions. It is in spite of their conviction that they gave an energetic and well-drilled performance. That, combined with the momentum of Murray Ballentine's play, yielded an event which should have attracted more attention and support.

*Department* is described as a "comedy thriller about corruption in the police force". (Perhaps that keeps people away?)

The deception is misleading. The play is no celebration of life. It is set comic in an world view, not thinking in its convenience but, like David Williamson's *The Reproaches*, it reveals what black humour, the limitations of institutions, prove inadequate in whose hands power is a lethal and legal weapon. Like Williamson's play also, as these interesting observations are made through the development of a character who has the ability to take threatened violence back on itself and transform violence into mythos. Unlike Williamson's play that work rises naturally as the exploration of violence in the core of apparent self-control rather than the execution of violence and, as a consequence, it is in many ways more shocking than *The Reproaches*.

The play investigates investigation. In one act, a single Act one has been stolen from a police

station. Two associates are sought. Both are innocent, but official suspicion starts a game of hide and seek and a pervasive indifference to regulations from the other. Two associates play escape and bungle the routine "Department". They assume that is a police job to "get" someone rather than find out about the death. There is a neat parallelism of upper and lower echelon characters, but little about the fourth.

In a game starting way, the fourth character, McIlveney, is slowly manipulated by the playwright in the center of the play. The one about whom we know the least starts the process. Inquisition. Why? Because he will not break under pressure, when all the others have broken. And just in the end of the play we know of we need to know about him. He is a model cop who loves to agree the line.

The play is built around the moment at which Spartan begins to suspect that he will not break McIlveney and listen to his belief in himself. At that point the Director must decide whether the play is about winners or losers. If it is to be winners, then McIlveney becomes the dying hero. If losers, Pyre, Spartan and to a lesser extent, Cook, win the attention. The real threat is to person: the characters and that with McIlveney. It is easy because Pyre, Cook and Spartan are sympathetic characters — naïveté victim, potential operator, and puppy. We know them, and across Flanagan, Hinchelwood and Nally made them more than life size. They will never and magnificent become a standard model for Pyre, Cook, and departmental

deception. The real result in dramatic terms, is suspense, and we can be sorry but safe. This is what happened.

The difficult choice is to praise McIlveney and overstate the "winner's" position. Ron Rogers saw the potential in this choice and worked hard to create an ambivalence, excitement and anticipation of a final climax. Despite his efforts, the development of plot, pushed single-mindedly by the other characters, swamped his bid for focus, and McIlveney assumed a heroic courage, an agent of death order that death's costume.

This focus decision determined the quality of every other scene choice. For example, David Flanagan (Pyre) was his scene involve, the movement of director, like a wound. The kind of anticipation was, like the production itself, having but somewhat predictable.

Yet there was a clue to the full potential of both play and production in the initial setting — a two-level structure with modern supports. Here was a clear, economical statement which declared the merits of a presentational rather than representational approach. The movement was distancing McIlveney alienated. Together they might have exposed the anatomy and psychology of violence and the shoring of "apolitical" authority. They succeed, given the choice, for the production was busy pursuing an effect.

For all that there was enterprise, challenge and a task in the shape of the play. If the Company continues to take risks in programming, production and interpretation then hopefully the same will come when there are more people in performance than seats to accommodate them.



Terrace Donowald (left) and Maggie Miller (Kristen Hepburn) in *Miss Julie*

Photo Jeff Brady

## Not an unmitigated triumph

### MISS JULIE

JACK PHILLIPS

*Miss Julie* by August Strindberg. Hippie Theatre Theatre  
Malvern, Vic. Started 19 June 1979. Director: Roger  
Palmer. Designer: Robert Hansen. Movement: Wendy  
Robertson. Stage Manager: Emma Fisher.  
Act: James Browne. Miss Julie: Julie McGregor. Kristen  
Hepburn. (Reviewed)

In making Strindberg's *Miss Julie* I have never been quite able to grasp the reasons for its high reputation. Usually I have found Strindberg's writing of the natural too plain, more explicitly stated than implicitly evoked. For the controversy under the play can also become all but indemonstrable. There is a little too much assumption about Miss Julie's background, and that of her class, so much so that it is rather difficult to view as catastrophic her decline being with a general. The issue of the anatomic code never seems wide enough to stage its wanted Miss Julie's destruction.

Wages Palmer's production of *Miss Julie* does so take the issue out of it all. Instead of the

consequence, it is mostly of a mother's eye, we have all the child of the writer's eye. Instead of an apparently ready Miss Julie we have a quarter-thawed and cramped figure, deprived of both volubility and mobility. Palmer has also chosen to play down the more obvious class distinctions (Kristen the cook looks like a governess, presumably in contrast to an average class husband).

Such a local stage-strategy approach needs to replace that which has been abandoned and take comfort with much of the play, of allowing itself from the life of the work. Where repression is the order of the investigation, deliberately it seems necessary that something be exposed — sexuality, class envy, the impulses of the individual self. We need to be aware of the not beneath the so-called class behind the form.

The point of Palmer's stage-strategy look at the play was compounded by a highly structured set function further stirred and enlarged and the widely panoramic effect of much of the scene. When limits, a coherent, systematic was required and a lot of baffling and contradictory conventions.

As a part of all this, I found a puzzling disparity in the style of performance. Julie McGregor's Miss Julie, which appeared to bear the chief burden of the production, was

concerned in the past of social reason, and stage-strategy. One wished the actress had been allowed to allow herself to unfold experimentally and theatrically, to test up against and the wrong shapes of the production.

Terrace Donowald's Jean, on the other hand, was relatively theatrical and rich in dramatic touches, possessed of an energy that became almost brutal when set beside the creations of Miss Julie. The emotion, lack of connection between the two characters made it hard to believe that they would become together except in some kind of expurgated Maggie Miller, in the small part of Kristen looked most at in her performance, strongly filling the destruction of her role, and paradoxically the most atmospheric figure of the evening though latent in the packing order.

Robert Hansen's design, while attractive enough in itself, did not live with the production. Its visual statements — the invasion of reality and the turning of the tables on the upper classes — though well executed finally failed to make an effective effect.

Ultimately the *Miss Julie* adopted a fresh experimental strategy, something in such relief to the stock readings we are routinely turned up. Regrettably the venture could not be hailed as unmitigated triumph.

# Provincialism in Melbourne

## UNCLE VANYA

GABRIEL HUTCHINGS

*Uncle Vanya* by Anton Chekhov. Melbourne Theatre Company. Melbourne Theatre. Melbourne. 20 June 1977. Director: Bruce Miller. Design: Brian McCulloch. Lighting: Janis Jurecka. Costume: Edward Hanks. Yelena: Elizabeth Alexander. Sonia: Heather Glen. Vanya: Mike Ward. Varya: Diana Colburn. Anny: David Pearson. Lyubov: Judith Hordley. Maria: Julia Blake. Fokor: Bruce Shaw. (Production)

There is no playwright more popular year after year in Melbourne than Anton Chekhov. And for good reason. His accounts of provincial life and a similar view of Melbourne life very well. Both Chekhov and Melbourne often seemed to be almost unable to move, however much they might speak about it, all continually repeating in a dreamy sequence of desolation. Other people are busy though. Chopping down trees. Progressing.

Provincialism is a state of mind, it is the

underlying force behind the action of *Uncle Vanya*. But while it is a precise description of a certain class at a certain time, *Uncle Vanya* as performance makes an ironic comment on the action yet provincial town that it appears to. One of the defining characteristics of the provincial is the feeling that if only "x" would happen then things would be great. If only I had the money. If only he loved me. The Prof and his gold digger wife may go away, but Sonya will be saying "if only" — if only the wine, syringes, or Anny's father, or the more capable of peasant.

And *Uncle Vanya* hounded the man who worked for 25 years to keep the estate in order to pay for the Prof's researches and wrong? The arrogance of the Prof in trying to tell off what Vanya thinks is his and Sonya's dream has to be balanced — the funny, unbalanced attempt on the Prof's life.

To bring all this off without boring the audience to tears is difficult. So often productions of Chekhov are treated with such modesty that the only outcome is sleep. However desperate they might be though, they are also critical and therefore at least a bit funny. Directors sometimes seem content to create

mood by allowing actors to mellow in well composed scenes.

To a certain extent all this is true of Bruce Miles, *Uncle Vanya* the past is slow and empty. The scenes and acts are given weight. The shoulders slump. The actors seem to be restrained as the characters they play. But I liked it well enough, particularly the more active second half.

The performance that did impress me was that of Sonia Colburn. For whom *Uncle Vanya* might have been written. In the kind of role he does extremely well, gentle, world, dreamy presence and in the best possible way almost invisible. There is, the present, great, with, but a word, beauty, work for him better than some of the other actors' mostly unarticulated agonies of suffering squashes. He sometimes felt quite away to himself.

But for all the strengths of the play, it felt mostly like a presentation without a definite point of view. The director, Brian McCulloch, did away no space stage with some fresh ideas, but of the environmental sort (the end of the world, and we can't do anything about it) was what the play was about, that it lost me. Because, it isn't about that at all.



Anthony Hawken (Fokor) and Julia Blake (Maria) in the MTC's *Uncle Vanya*. Photo: David Parker



## Perth — commercial classic and some excellent fringe

### THREE SISTERS GAY PLAYS

#### COLLIN CHUBBEN

*Three Sisters by Anton Chekhov: The National Theatre Company at the Playhouse Perth, April 1-7, 1994. Director: Stephen Heath. Designers: Jane Topley, Lorraine. Sound/light: Geoff Morgan. Stage: George. Actors: Frances: Peter Waters. Fumiliar: Alan Scales. Olga: Jane Miller. Maria: Elizabeth Hall. Irina: Gail Barker. Supporting: Leslie Wright, Sarah Lee, Alan Carroll. Technical: Bruce Lee. Scenery: Brian Marshall. Costumes: James Drake. Props: Sue Hall. Hair: Alan Pender. Transport: Paul King. Audio: Margaret Ross. (Information)*

*Outcasts of the Empire and The City of the Future by Graham Smith. Best in the West. Perth, 11-18 Jan 1994. Director: Colin McCall. With: Ross Ford, Andrew Smith, Irene Smith. (Information)*

Theatre in Perth as I have covered the full spectrum of commercial, subcommercial and fringe, and some interesting perceptions emerged.

On the commercial front we had Alan Ayckbourn's *Bedroom Farce* which seemed to me to stand up well enough to this antiquated, remote when compared with the original I saw at the National in London. Why the National bothered commissioning *Wine End* comedy which is commercially viable in its own right escapes me, but perhaps they are proving they are not naive.

The Playhouse presented Chubbren's *Three Sisters* by which I have to confess I found myself unmoved. Of course Chubbren is notoriously difficult to do well or even reasonably convincingly, which is partly what sets *Strawberries* off on its search for the whiffing of good writing. The first time I saw the *Disco* production of *Three Sisters* with the *Swedish* songs in the Old Vic it was evident but the second time reality gave its charge. As in a 'back to the drawing-board' *Constantin*, I wonder? But I think in the case of the Playhouse some reasons can be suggested.

In the first place the strategy was to play the characters from and frustrations directly 'text level' so to speak. Surely the reason a Chubbren, his closeness to reality, is that people try to present a front to the world, to build an image for others and for themselves, to keep some dignity and sense of self and purpose and a through the process that the private and disagreements there. To play them directly is to play the subtext. Let me give two examples. If you play Olga as a feminist or schoolteacher there

is no tension and comfort for the actor to go. Similarly Veronika is not only an excellent comedian who goes in for rather waffling philosophising about what will happen in two or three hundred years, but a *Bedroom* Comstock with the military bearing and sense of command that the position carries. With the smaller roles Douglas and Fergus for instance the choice was to play too close to caricature. It was all as though the various characterised problems had been raised and before curtain up even perhaps before the first rehearsal and the resultant caricatures presented. The clue to Chubbren is perhaps in a comment in a letter to his friend Somerset: "Let us be just as complex and as simple as life as people else and in the worst case their happiness is made or their lives broken."

Somerset suggested to me that the pace was too slow. This is a common misconception when the pace is not so much slow as too even. Here the longer speeches had not been thought through and even, you remembered. The changes in tone and rhythm and in emotional direction came about as too gratuitous. Add to this three weeks rehearsal (I am not one of those who think any play can be done in three weeks with actors who do not form an ensemble and who do not get enough changes in the great realistic playwrights of night such as Ibsen and Chekhov) and there were:

To the fringe. These excellently written, devised and acted gay plays, last night at the Hotel at the Wall for Gay Fringe Week. Two *Outcasts of the Empire* comedies, actually *Monsoon* and a longer one *Under the Power of Phoenix*, all by Kevin playwrite Michael Heath, masterfully directed by Colin McCall and well acted by Andrew Smith, Sarah Smith and a really brilliant performance Ross Oak. The Playhouse have reopened the Greenroom but not with financial backing only with charitable good prices from the wall. It is in fact for experimental work on a do-it-yourself basis. The first attempt by the *Strawberry Theatre Ensemble*, now Ian Dore's *Art. A. C. Trust* *Revised in Peace* (I suffered from his acting as it is well, and there being no director. Surely if the Playwrights' Conference has taught us anything it is that a writer first and theatre needs the help of hard-headed theatre people, professional director actors and even a dramaturg in home and stage for weeks. The presentation suffered from lack of shape, direction and coherence and I think Mr Dore would have got much more help and useful information for the future by making up being the playwrights however frustrating that might be.

Lastly, the people responsible for the *Wine*

Australian Institute of Technology Theatre Arts course have started to run a monthly Sunday night presentation of the work of their students, usually in the form of two-act plays. The first I was invited to give was an excellently devised (by John Moody) version of *Myra Tilly's* *Clare Down Mother* with some striking performances as well. In June we had Peter Kavanagh *Monsoon* cards silly deal, and a quite moving production of Howard Barker's *Christmas Love*, surprisingly acted by Frank Johnson. Chris Greenacre and Donald Smith in good performances as I can remember seeing their students in a long time, quite up to what we see professionally elsewhere at times. The play was directed with a great power, skill and timing by Steve Adrell and Thomas Moon. It is good to see in these times of economic crisis, when the arts are likely to take an early knock, that some very real committed young talent is emerging and getting a chance to work itself out.

## AUSTRALIA COUNCIL LITERATURE BOARD PLAYWRIGHT IN RESIDENCE

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## LETTERS

Continued from page 8

Dear Sir,

Firstly I would like to thank the many musical lovers who have written and contacted me announcing their support for my proposal for the establishment of an Australian Music Theatre Company.

Secondly, I apologise to Mr F Van Sonsten for my compelling *Collier* line — my typing mistake and not that of the splendid Theatre Australia typographer.

Thirdly and in answer to Mr W Oakes, — I have nothing but unalloyed praise for the Australian Musical Theatre and I am fully aware of the constant musical rain of these hard-working theatre troupes — all of which simply proves my point — the greatest prizes were musicals and will even wrap off to the local musical society to make the latest production.

The establishment of the First Australian Music Theatre Company — and I promise you it will be established — will provide the cream of the talent from these amateur societies and there is no mountain of it with a proper training ground a chance of permanent employment within the structure of an efficient and totally professional musical company working under some of the best directors in the world and national recognition of their undoubted talent.

Mr Oakes, thank God for the amateur musical societies — without them the art of the musical would have died in this country years ago may they go on forever!

Yours faithfully,  
**MOORE FRANKLIN**  
 Sydney NSW

Let's hear it for the Musical!

Dear Sir,

As your critic Richard Fotheringham has put my credibility on the line, as he 'told' my play *Breaker* (*your* May Edition) I feel compelled to reply. When he says about the play is literally "his tragedy" and I have no complaint there, but when he writes that I should have been "a little more concerned with the complexity of the truth" that a theatre man is.

As he writes that I spoke "the recent evidence that all these were guilty as charged" I presume he means historical truth.

Perhaps it is a symptom of the propaganda that is so strongly thrust at our conscious society that your critic presumes that 'new evidence' is historical!

The fact is that the Trooper Side diary did not show any new evidence that indicated that Morton shot women and children. I presume your critic has taken the information for a misleading article in *The Australian* which informed Morton was involved in these atrocities, when in fact they happened prior to Morton joining the campaign.

As mentioned twice in my play, Trooper Side

informed King's evidence. He did this to save his own neck and therefore I consider it reasonable to accept that his 'new evidence' is not to be trusted without suspicion.

Your critic says also that I "ignore the recent evidence that all these were guilty as charged". This is not true, they were, as stated in the play. Faulty guilty of the first two charges only is enough play of mercy recommending the Court and NOT guilty of the third charge.

However, I assure Mr Fotheringham that I did go to some length not to "con" my audience. I did attempt to hide my play as several foundations and became there is now over the years to be aware new evidence etc etc, I am glad he has given me the opportunity to place an innocent my stand when writing the play.

I was writing a play and not a thesis, I do not pretend to have written without imperfections, I'll have what I say but still — outside my mind, number of that, etc — there it has been to give an account that a drama, from the "Australian camp" and therefore is based. In short it is a version of "The Breaker" by an Australian contemporary. But as a writer yourself, Mr Fotheringham, which would you choose to write about, *David* or *Collette*?

So be it, the very purpose, the force of a man attempting to find justice in this world runs dramatically on the play taking this time. To give an audience the experience of witnessing a person attempting to investigate what he or she sees as an injustice has always been one of the great strengths of theatre. To make myself clear, I am not just referring to dramas with Communist drama, but rather to all plays that deal with tragedy. So in the process we witness lies, misadventure and goodness shaken before us in such a way that we are disturbed. As a playwright I cannot make any other apology to Mr Fotheringham than that I might have done a better.

As for *Breaker* Morton I assure Mr Fotheringham that if anything I have had no criticism considerably less than what Victorian nationalists because he would not have seemed credible to a modern audience (as stated). For example, I quote part of a letter of his to Major Lambton, The Australian Commanding Officer in the Boer Campaign.

"My dear Major, — I shall be glad, with all. You are alright and will live to go home again. If anything happens to me, write to my governor, and my girl (—N Devant. Also our children people in Sydney home and tell 'em all the facts. Now there was shot by the Boers and how I carried on — same as he would have done had I been shot then again in 'Vogel's' Hill I finished one Boer hand I would have gone on until I had a cartridge left and then used the butt and then have been wiped out. That's what I'd expect if I had fallen into Boer lines — wouldn't have growned either — it would have been just part of the programme — war that is a damned rough treatment that from our own British (Paddy)." —

Certainly Morton was far from a saint, and

needed for me make it clear that dramatically I had to show him as there is less than human quality that is so important if audiences are to feel any sympathy. However, I feel confident that he was not just the misleader that some of those that enjoy playing our national pastime of cutting down tall poppies are now depicting him. I wrote this play in the hope that the subject would receive the public notice it deserved, but let it be not now shown on the tube with the backwash. Yes let us, as you suggested Mr Fotheringham be "concerned with the complexity of the truth", which means we must remember there are no truths in history, but rather opinions only. Morton did not believe himself guilty, or, at least, not the most guilty, and I must help but feel there is some relevance in that.

Yours faithfully,  
 Ken Ross  
 Little Houghton, SA.

Dear Sir,

We are located in the centre of the city (In fact we are the only independent art Gallery located in the centre of Sydney) We felt that we should do something because of this. So we have organised a series of musical events to be held in our hall on Wednesdays from 12.30 for one hour every three weeks. Every three weeks we open a new exhibition in the Gallery and so we have planned our events to coincide with the changing exhibitions. We wanted to give people the opportunity to have a break in the middle of the day, to bring down their heads, and to listen to the music and enjoy themselves. It also gives an opportunity to younger musicians to play. We have already held a couple of these events (The Larrikins, played for us, Australian traditional folk songs, and Keith Harris played a revival on mandolin and dulcimer. So far the events have been well attended and much enjoyed by those who came.

We wanted to let people know about them. We would like to let more people to come and join us.

Yours sincerely,  
 Oliver Charles,  
 DIRECTOR, MACQUARIE GALLERIES.



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 that keeps  
 on coming!

## FROM THEATRE TO FILM

(Continued from page 18)

rolled up windows of our cars. If we are standing at movie lines, we will avoid it at our wit.

I once heard someone say that Australian film went classical, they chose on the promised immortality. We built up the expectation of [fulfillment], but when it comes to the crunch, the cinema happens behind a closed door, or yesterday, or to someone else. Or, as in a classic example, the drama is presented in a written prototype to the film that rolls up on screen with the final credits. On *Cable*, we waited for two hours to see what happened to you and there we were lobbed off with a couple of sentences.

One traditional safety valve for feeling in the cinema: Of course cinema is also a traditional ground for the well indulgent excesses of what groups. But in some degree, virtually lost to be there, because the contact with the audience is immediate. [You don't have to rely on his office help] to judge the success of your attempt to communicate and entertain, you can feel it.

Someone who works in the cinema for a long time learns not only how people respond, but how to manipulate that response. My favourite story about Buster Keaton is the one about his discovery of the show take. When he was a kid, he and his parents had a vaudeville act and as part of the act, Buster was kicked around by his father. But would kick and Buster would cry. It didn't get many laughs until Buster realised that if he weaned for the scenes of those before he bowled, the audience fell in the seats. So it went, kick, one two three WHEEE! and the audience loved him.

**RICHARD WHARFITE:** It's a crash course and I find it very stimulating for that, although it's overwhelming in a way, when one is surrounded with technical details one can't take in initially apart from the fact that I've just embarked on a new phase of my career, and won't be the next failure he able to take one off to do film work, I'd like to become part of the film industry and make some movies. One needs a familiarity with the medium technically speaking and it's naive to say you can't wait to communicate what you want to a good crew. The course is providing just what we need — it's wonderful.

Another theatrical genius whose name is known in the real book rather of film, was Sergei Eisenstein. And it wasn't that he abandoned theory in favour of film, he continued to work on both media for his entire life.

And if you want to know how to construct a solid seasonal graph for a film, read Constantin Scodanvelli's advice to the actor. But leave your prejudices about Strindberg and Ibsen behind.

So, maybe Gill Brady is once something with his concern to familiarise theatre people with the

mythology of film talk. Mostly everyone of the nice people taking the course expressed a long held ambition to get into film, but they felt they'd never had the opportunity, or had been intimidated by the mystique of film and its techniques.

**GRAEME BUNDILL:** The work we do has been mainly things I'm familiar with having made 14 feature films and done television work as an actor but it's still useful to consolidate. It's been a concentrated look at the technical side, marketing, post production, distribution and exhibition, connected and legitimate aspects, alongside with the simple training experience. An odd thing is that we are probably more severe as theatre directors than film directors are, with the state the industry's in — "Dumbbells" during after three weeks, and "The Night The Foxes" after two. A contradiction I've noticed in the course staff is that against the nature of the industry is in your film, the low budget films, and the first film decisions have come from this area that the major reinforcements completely on conservation and a serious international which gives a slight sense. But it's fascinating to learn the new language the shortest cut.

The course appears to be designed to equip these directors with a superficial knowledge of film techniques and then show them in at the deep end, by directing a short film which will be shown commercially as a support attraction with a feature. It's a bit like sending someone off to Africa with a first aid kit in one hand and a book on How to Speak Swahili in the other and asking them to convert the rain forest. It's not an easy task. There's much more in understanding film than just knowing what "crossing the line" means and what lenses to use.

But the deep end is the best place to learn to swim, because your survival depends upon it. These directors are not unknown beginners, they have well established reputations and a strong motivation to succeed in this new form of expression.

Graeme Bundill looked around at the others during a break on the weekend and said that most of them had started in drama or about the same time and he guessed that this time they felt needed and in need of a change.

For most of them their beginnings were in university dramatic societies and their careers in theatre just followed as a development of that more concrete interest. The Australian film industry hadn't yet manifested itself when they were establishing themselves professionally and they weren't many openings for well educated people with degrees in television. So they started in theatre, a haven for intellectuals with artistic ambitions.

**AARNE NEEDLE:** There's the old problem of moving into the film world, someone has to ask you, and in you learn on the job, or you need the money to do a film of your own or you'll have to lose in your job and go and work in the industry maybe as something like a prop man — which some of us are afraid to do. So this is really fantastic and I'm loving it.

Until now, only one person has managed to combine a career in theatre with an active interest in film. Jim Sharman came out to the workshop on Monday morning and talked to his peers in theatre about what it is like to "cross the line" into film. After three days of listening to producers talking about budgets and scheduling, technicians discussing cameras, lenses, lights and microphones and editors, designers and directors it was relaxing to listen to someone who had actually done what these people are about to do, from a new craft.

Sharman said that when he began work on his first film, he kept reminding himself that film is after all just shadows on a screen. He didn't feel his lack of knowledge was an impossible handicap, he simply asked "How do you do that?" He told a story about another once new director who was trying to bluff his way through without admitting his ignorance and was tripping by the film crew, who told him he needed a "technical unit", which turned out to be a sheer right centre main box.

He says "Everyone has to invent cinema for themselves", to learn and pass through a process of discovering the possibilities of the medium for themselves. But even though cinema things can only be learnt through experience, there are basic lessons that can be picked up from other people as help prepare one for the experience. Learning to Jim Sharman is one of those basic lessons. He has clarity of mind and clarity of expression that make him interesting and valuable to learn to.

**MALCOLM ROBERTSON:** To me it's a development that is overdue in the Australian film industry. In England, Europe and America the stage has had a kind of influence on the history of film and this has not happened in Australia — except of course for Jim Sharman — therefore we're late part of our heritage. Theatre has been terrible for 37 years, but look at America and see its greater relationship between theatre and film. Film has always been part of me and now I'm getting to understanding.

As usual, the people handling the money would waste, but as Sharman says, "Time is the biggest enemy in good film. One of the things to go when time and money are being. Continued on Page 24

# Dances of Death in London

## Irving Wardle

The BBC's four-pronged Russian series, a rare audit: way with a pair of productions to gladden the hearts of Kremlinologists and Thaw critics alike. The first re-creates the last stand of the gallant Whites, before the Bolsheviks' annexation of the Ukraine, the second shows a humble Soviet citizen being driven to attempted suicide and ending the Politburo to declare his love opinion of Marx.

Neither of these works matches the English stage in the Russian underground, but on the contrary from the Soviet dancers of the revolution. The first, Mikhail Bulgakov's *The White Guard*, was his long in the company of the Moscow Art Theatre where Bulgakov allegedly saw a no less than three times. The second, *The Sacrifice* is the work of Nikolai Erdman, author of the silent search for *The Miserable*, a factor which provided an unusually rich between *Nezavishimiy* and *Myshchik* to gain the rights to its sequel: it was *Myshchik* who won the first round, but after 12 months of rehearsal his production of *The Sacrifice* was banned by the Central Licensing Board. The play has never been seen in the USSR, and although its earlier level on until 1976 he never wrote another play.

These two plays (1914) and a sharp reminder that the history of the Soviet stage is not simply a story of revolutionary directors. *The White Guard* (1906) is a genuine neo-Chaikovsky treatment in the Soviet tradition that was available in the years of the New Economic Policy. *Myshchik*'s play (1912) is similar up less than in name, it is a last cry of outrage before the arts were left to silence in the words of Vladimir Mayakovsky "but the meaning was the last play in the Soviet country called *The Sacrifice*."

As *The White Guard* has been around West European stages for a good few years, I shall not dwell on Henry Ky's revival at the Aldwych beyond noting its success in recreating the Chaikovsky family scene like the *Three Sisters* ensemble 20 years on with the police and members of the Civil War, and singing out the role of the chaotic chaos. Lurking in another triumph for the BBC's subterranean cinema, Richard Griffiths. *The Sacrifice* by contrast, is unknown territory and on the strength of Ken Davenport's beautiful studio production as two play authors emerges as a major five-figure dramatic, at first on a level with *Man of Iron* or *Valley of the*

though the spirit companion was made by Gorky who called him "the new Gorky."

*The Sacrifice* tells the story of an unemployed "idle man", Sergey Fedotkin, who is living in poverty on his wife's earnings in a cramped apartment he also shares with his pregnant mother-in-law. With his pregnant wife's illness he is making it with by teaching himself the rules. Sergey's tragic end is a Soviet Tsar's Harrold. The expression goes even stronger once word gets around that between a disintegrating world and a succession of well-known weapons began bringing his door. Symbols of the intelligentsia the arts the church, and even the state itself, go down with Sergey to fall himself on their behalf and leave a scathing note behind as "someday only the dead may say what the living think."

The flustered Sergey agrees and stands a slap-up banquet at home of his forthcoming house guests. All very well, except that his cousin goes being haunted to put the bugs and the banquet is followed by a mock wake and a mock funeral during which Sergey's changing in a flash from a martyr to a parasite — even leaves his coffin to announce that all he wants is a quiet life and a living wage plus the right to lead a whinger life. A hard Communist I beseech you in the name of millions, just as the freedom to whinger, not want to even hear it."

In contrast to these machines, the piece is in the *Fyodor* class, quite an achievement when you consider that as fully fought as it is good from most and terror. Mechanically it adopts the classical verse, passing that no objection is made in its mouth as a living man. But beyond that, no more can with a double edge like that of *Dead Souls*. Erdman dissolves the mechanical and classical passages in a subtle way as any Party apparatus could expect. He is at the same time withering the regime that has cast them in the role of parasites. The whole comedy is placed on the brink of impassioned laughter, a laughing act which informs every part of the Soviet production. Both Roger Kerr's *Disappearance* and *Sergey* to the set which evokes the Gorky bureaucracy, through a telegraphic back wall of chains down. Erdman's whinger has found the right whinging policy.

Apart from Bill Brylson's dark adaptation of Michael Hems' *Disappearance* at the Cottesloe

studio in show bringing British over for the pleasure of visitors there are two more from National Theatre productions to report. Simon Gray's *Close Of Play* (Lyncheon) follows *Blacky* and *Disappearance* as another interesting round the coffin of the intellectual establishment, that time in the form of one of those jolly family occasions where, by dinner every member of the party is here to share before the evening is out. As soon as John Standing collapses from a pillar of the BBC was a riposte, a family drink is a simply a question of Ming in the drink to be as the others are concerned. The comedy of the play is that it all happens within the placed name of the father, an old professor who has collected a British higher education on his children with such unhappy results. He may or may not be dead. But Harold Pinter's production will be remembered as the show that saved Michael Redgrave as a one last gasp.

The Glynn Theatre, meanwhile has put its own on another very interesting *Disappearance* comedy in a one-acting English version by Tom Stoppard. Another *Disappearance*, that name from Friedrich Schlegel, the play revolves around the deadly images of Friedrich Schlegel who has made a bonfire out of electric light bulbs in the brief intervals between his whiling and the news. The piece begins with the suicide of one man, and ends with his repeat killing of another in a duel. In between there is a strange attack, games of chance, pin an Alpine mistake in a hotel, finally staffed by the manager's alignment program.

My problem is that I did not believe a word of it. Peter Wood's production is a surprisingly happy-go-lucky production on Victorian decadence, rather than a portrait of particular people in particular circumstances. But on its own terms, with an excellent woman actor pitched on the edge of universal sympathy, Alpine language (and a good bit that goes up and down), and movements working through dry as nails, it is a surprising and superbly confident comedy which also has the overall sense of John Wood — his funny and spare chills to fear — to the third stage. With Wood and John Dexter (now releasing *As You Like It* by the Glynn) both back from America, things are looking up on the South Bank.



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Continued from page 12

4th Character: If it offends everyone, perhaps it's good.  
5th Character: Louise Smith said this.  
6th Character: Where is Louise Smith?  
Character: New York, London and Paris.  
4th Person: Must be time for the busstop.  
5th Character: What's a busstop?  
Character: Is it like a busstop?  
4th Character: No, it's a place to get rid of the stuff, you know.  
5th Character: Like a tree.  
Character: Is that a bus?  
5th Character: Don't be afraid.  
4th Character: Where are the new Russians? the new Williams?  
5th Character: Royal Park, Gladstone, overseas, or dead.  
5th Character: Someone going that bed isn't picking tickets.  
5th Character: Zuckers offend women.  
4th Character: Let's do *The Fifth Family*.  
5th Character: Show again in *Amber*.  
3rd Character: Play the military concert.  
4th Character: What we need is another Miss Gales.  
4th Character: As long as it's a woman.  
5th Character: Born on some, so what name?  
3rd Character: Success is time, it's been

done before.  
So her failure.  
But there is a girl.  
Bill Ganser's learning top dancing. He'll never sell me.  
If he was a woman, we could do *Booster Menor* again. A top dancing version.  
Born on some are good for the performer's soul.  
But there is no soul.  
Isn't that awful?  
There's no such thing as the soul, or the theatre, or weekend.  
Or an audience.  
What we need is a new street, my dancing, original weekend.  
But Barry Oakley's done that before.  
4th Character: Barry Oakley's script, that's for sure.  
This parenthesis where law and board.  
Come while from programed marriage. I'll say.  
Maybe we're just no good.  
What about a whip-around for a flagon?  
Five bits in for a flagon

and a milk.  
(Enter Robinson) I said Dorian's cat, isn't my first job.  
Character: Better bring that up at the Executive Meeting, Tim.  
Tim: Come on, five minutes before the workshop close.  
Character: How off, you filthy drunks.  
What's this part?  
(Exit Tim, Dorian, Robinson)  
Tim: There seems to be a bit something.

Continued from page 12

described in jet production is a seasonal one. Perhaps these theatre directors, having worked in a field where rehearsals are often the most creative period, will be able to bring some of their good ideas with them into film work and make time and money available for rehearsal. This is not just going over scenes but working with and preparing actors and understanding the depth of the script. Perhaps somebody onto the scene.

The transition from theatre to film may not be without its problems and the moving camera can be so more than a familiarisation period but it is a beginning, an impetus for three decades to make the transition. And perhaps the most familiarisation will produce a strong and healthy off-spring, to revitalize the film industry.

As Anne Neume says "there's no word for not making it, it's my dictionary."

Roger Pulvers is a playwright and director. His eleventh play to be produced in this country was *Bertolt Brecht Leaves Los Angeles*, performed in June at Hoagie in Melbourne. But he is "also a translator, from Polish, Japanese, Russian, and Swedish. Among his many translations are novels by Iwasaki, plays by Witkiewicz, poems by Miyazawa and Gdylowsky, and numerous short stories. In 1977 he was invited to Warsaw by the Polish Writer's Union to translate a play by Teresa Lubkiewicz-Orbanowicz. Most recently, he has directed *Miles Aulic*, in his own translation, at Hoagie.

# Roger Pulvers

*'Something strange has happened to us. Where are we? I'm afraid that this place is under a curse. And we're under a curse as well. Excuse me if my words sound artificial...I'm unable to speak naturally...'*

*Henryk in The Marriage, by Witold Gombrowicz.*

I'd like to think that all drama is a kind of translation — that the words of a play we write down in one language are not those we use off stage. Words in a play are translated onto the stage, and they retranslate a second world of those on stage. Words on stage have their own grammar and particular meanings, and the stage itself is a third context.

Perhaps this is one thing Gombrowicz means in the above quote from *The Marriage*. Henryk is referring to the language of a drama. The entire play is the re-creation of a drama. But, as a drama so it is an stage — the logic of the language — the form of the poem — has an internal order. The play makes sense only if the viewer is drawn into that order. If another logic, a logic of the outside, is imposed on the play, the play then fails for the particular viewer who isn't going, just.

What are the particular problems of translating plays, as opposed to poems or novels? What levels of expression should a translator choose for the English equivalent, when transcribing into English? What attitude should be suggested in speech so that they can use the translated text in the most playable effective way?

Translating plays is a good deal harder than translating other forms of writing, I think. With a novel, you need not worry about finding words that have to be spoken. Even the dialogue in novels need not be made specific, since the reader only reads it to himself. Much of the dialogue of novels is added in the original anyway. With Yukio Mishima, for instance, the spoken parts are precisely added, and they should appear so in translation as well. A great exception to this would be Oshichi, whose words were precisely written to suggest speech. But, in general, you as transcribing a novel and try with the prose reconstructing the original voice with a greater freedom.

Translating poetry requires a different skill, that of finding the essential feeling of the original and finding one singular mode of English expression to communicate it. Many poets have

translated other poets, and in some cases the poem may even improve, so that, you might say, some things is lost in the original.

What about the theatre? There are specific rules. Each character in the translation should have his own linguistic personality. So often translation of plays unwittingly under all the characters blend, because they don't consciously "live" in differentia between them. The result is that the play sounds too monotonous, as if all the characters were speaking with the one voice of the playwright. I'm now translating Gogol's *The Inspector General*. Gogol's language is so rich and offbeat, and each of the many characters has a "word personality". If I don't capture this variety, the result will be a boring monolith.

Another problem is on the stage directions. If the original is a piece of European drama, then we can largely assume that the characters' physical responses will be similar to ours. If the playwright wrote "Gentle throat up his arm,

in despair", the translator should translate it as such. We throw up our arms in despair in this director's and actor's perspective, of course, whether or not that is on stage. But, in translating a Japanese play there may be a problem. Japanese responses are often cultural, rather than emotional. One country's translation is another country's translation. A Japanese, for instance, points up his head when he's referring to himself, not to his chest. A wave of the hand back and forth may indicate a gesture of refusal, a chopping gesture means "excuse me". Any Japanese audience immediately recognizes these. But to a western audience they communicate nothing, or perhaps something quite different. Here is where the translator has to act as director and make a choice: Do you leave it and create confusion, or do you put out a certain gesture from among our cultural responses? If, at any rate, the actors end up choosing or communicating to a western audience and use gestures that mean something to us, then they run the risk of looking "too Japanese" to us. My personal preference is for the latter — because I don't believe in theatre as a display of anthropological information but as a vehicle for emotional communication.

Then there is the business problem of all — actors, time and director. I once translated a Japanese novel whose main character was a French poet who spoke fluent Osaka dialect. How to get that comic flavor in English? When I was working on *Miles Aulic*, I already felt this problem: language of love, the voice. In Swedish he is a part of the lower class that seizes to climb and often his language jumps from the vulgar to the pretentious.

What level, or levels of diction should be chosen for a character? Let's say a character says, in the Japanese original is an extremely colloquial manner "Goodness you just made me pain. You're headed sick!" If the original had just that amount of colour, then an American translator might translate it precisely like that. But, if an Australian actor said that on stage, it'd be ridiculed for speaking like Japanese.



Roger Pulvers



Colin Firth and Mel Gibson in SATC production of *Satan's School for Boys* Photo: David Wilson

characters they were back from *THEY* [sic] down "You bloody make me choose. Frank's best!" Now that captures all the flavour of the original too, but then why is Mr Firth's talking like a nervous eleven-year-old out of *Delbo*?

So what do you do? Most translators render down the original to make it "general", and we get, "You make me sick to my stomach, you stupid simpson!" The meaning is all there, but the character has lost some of his character.

I don't pretend to have the answer to this. Each decision should be made on its own merits. But, to water down the original makes for bland *Voltaire*-ese like consistency in stage speech.

When my translation of *Bonaparte's Elephant*, a play about the real effects of Napoleon on Japanese society, went on in New

Zealand, one of the critics (after talking over every line of language) told me that our choice was bad, just across the Tōkaidō (the road!) because the fact that Japanese moved and that they acted as normally as we supposedly do. The play's characters didn't conform to the image of Japan as stage-plastered pink web prints, and rebelled with Zen. The problem for him, I feel, was in the translation which used to present the Japanese characters as real humans — not his phoney Japanese — who were talking from the stage to a western, in this case New Zealand, audience.

But however natural and colloquial a translator should try to be in communicating dialogue he should likewise be careful not to invent pseudo-dialect. Here there is a distinction between actors and dialect. An

Australian actor should speak in an Australian accent and tone, and a translator should seek to reproduce the original speech patterns in an Australian way. We need here an Australian school of translation. We must speak our Cockney and our Clogan or our Brissy like to *MacIntyre*. Too often actors try to make what they think are 19th-century Russians, when it is, in fact impossible for an audience to know what those Russians spoke like, and furthermore, it is irrelevant to the performance. There can of course be the odd exception to this as when a comic actor puts on a Russian accent for a particular effect.

But when the language tends to dialect it should be used with care. Recently the ABC presented a highly interesting Australian play called *Prisoner* set in the period of the penal colony of the late 1930s. Although the play was originally written in English it has that quality which I used to talk about in the first paragraph: it translates a world onto the stage and comes its own line of meaning.

It was great that the actors spoke in the Australian accent, even pronounced the Russian names in that way. But take an expression from the play "First I go to the black bloody sea. Unfortunately I think this is called *ocean* and I think it's only done at Australian and Cockney. In this play it isn't. It is in the poem that I began to say to myself — Russians don't talk like this. It's a feeling I want to avoid. Who cares what Russians talk like this play is in English here in Melbourne. But the use of my dialect calls attention to itself. Too, Australian Accents. Australia has dialect pronunciations should generally be avoided in translations, or in plays that depict non-Australians.

All these are perhaps technical problems. The biggest problem of all is that too translators are largely very bad, uneducated translators. These translations offer only partial communication to our audience. They give the impression, from the stage of old-fashioned stiff European. They force our actors into rigid constraints when it is unnecessary. They are up-European classes as super-culture, aristocrats. They intimidate audiences.

If I could ask for one thing it would be that Australian playwrights do some translating, and that our stage directors not just talk some English to American academics, translators or holy men. Every large theatre should have a writer attached who works over its old translations. In some European theatres the job is a central one. If the writer isn't read the original he can teach native speakers.

When I set out to translate *Max Zule*, I first read all the English translations I found there all mixed. I didn't want actors put in verbal straits, getting nervous about a stage speaking a false variety of Swedish English, translations. I found little vibrance in the translations. A translator's foremost quality is accuracy. That is accuracy *here and now*.



Will Gubish and Michael Rutherford in *The Elephant* production of *Yamashita* Photo: Jane Kelly



International Year  
of the Child 1979

## Children's Theatre: A series to mark The International Year of the Child.

John Barker has been active for many years in amateur, semi-professional and professional theatre in Adelaide with particular involvement in alternative theatre groups. He is a graduate in Drama from Flinders University, SA, and taught drama in Secondary School level before joining the Tronka Theatre in Education Team. He has written a number of children's theatre scripts and was appointed Director of Tronka in 1979.

# Children in Children's Theatre

I have often heard children called the most difficult audience in the world. Certainly names for children for most actors is a step on the ladder only. Whether that is because of the lack of names attached to the field or due to an lack of names with children — or both, I am not sure.

Why lack of names? Unless this is a reflection of children being the few exceptions in our society that adults, despite what everyone says for the International Year of the Child (see article by Chris Woodward in *Theatre Australia* March 1979) The lack of status may relate to the lack of names. But why is this so, given the widely recognised facts that children have a wonderful dramatic sense and incredible ability for total imaginative involvement? In fact children can be, or rather are, the best audience in the world and the most satisfying. But they are not good passive consumers of theatre. Why should they be? Nor should we make them be — the "audience of tomorrow" concept.

However they are not necessarily the most audience or at all satisfying for those who make inefficient room for them. It is precisely the child's wrong sense of everything that is really important in theatre that makes theatre for children so difficult if this is not considered.

For children demand involvement — not actual, participatory involvement (as there is none really) and to be a passive consumer is almost unbearable torment.

Hence the names become so critical on "how to be a good audience", the constant proclamation of needs oriented to demand silence, the listening, the background, the use of terms of due reverence that so often characterise children's theatre performances. How

many actors sit on the edge with children calling out? How many regard it as an interruption and ignore it? While this is the performer to exclude it, and it, change things around because of it?

Alternatively, how often a performance turned to a personal kind of calling out: the making of a sound, or minor physical movement? Theatre for children can — and should — involve children for more than it does at present, and involvement is a real way, involving, allowing the children to be physically involved and doing, at least in some large. Performances can then never suggest, or do so far more slowly. The actor can experience the enormous satisfaction that children's own contributions can make, and we have theatre based on a far more real and immediate relationship with an audience, which children demand anyway — if given half a chance.

It is reasonable to see how often as children's theatre and theatre-in-education that content mostly contradicts the message of the form, eg. content that complains of audience men in a

form that expects children to sit passively and "believe" themselves — or involves them as participants but in a highly directed and homotopic way — as puppets in fact.

In Tronka Theatre in Education, participation and involvement is a major commitment. Not previous or because it is fashionable, but real because it is both essential and exciting. Also the possibilities for learning that can occur in the context become far more effective and enjoyable as the children imaginatively live through and directly experience the theme of the programme or performance.

It is a mistake to judge the work by the standards of adult theatre. Close limited performance is impossible and undesirable. The skills involved are different. Acting skills are essential but much more free than in adult theatre. Mime, for example, need only be as good as it necessary to communicate. Technical accuracy is unimportant, in fact it may be a positive hindrance if you are trying to be involved with children rather than perform in front of them — a dancing exhibition of some technique unnecessarily makes you the performer again.

This is no excuse for bad performance when good performance is needed. But the skills must first be projecting a characterisation and most to being a character, to the quality of vocal and the flexibility of the imagination, to the ability to empathise and think quickly, to a knowledge of your audience and how such factors as shape and colour may affect them, to an ability to promote discussion and undirected questioning, to what you are as a person rather than your ability to project the



*"Creating a world while following them to find a missing person in the Land of All Things Lost"*  
Photo: Adelaide Advertiser

## Children's Trusts continued



Children, wearing the characters' collectible T-shirts and making a "squeal" — from *The Age of the American Electric Train*

actor's mind. Perhaps actors often trade behind others' backs in order to advance.

There's a proven market: the consumer society. Children, and people generally, have to be taught to see the physical event for what it is, not just the message. The message from children has been made more adult than ever.

Again, must learn to start really relaxing to these subjects instead of what poses for relaxing at present, which is basically preparing to And people say easy to do. But there is enormous resistance!

**Theatre  
Australia**

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## Birthday Wine Offer from Penfolds & Camperdown Cellars

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actor in which  
you will meet  
the cops — the pure  
Evil Empire. Later  
Cordelia (Gloria  
Lauri) is beaten. God  
fathers & under a  
march for the day  
and will the hell in **Waters**  
and the **Waters**  
and the **Waters**

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## TALK

FRI SEPTEMBER 14  
to SAT OCTOBER 20

**LONG DAYS  
JOURNEY  
INTO NIGHT**

**Abstract**

**Abstract**

**Abstract**

[illegible]

■ **How do the great family stories play out?**  
 ■ **controversies, lawsuits, fines**

FRI DECEMBER 26 10  
SAT DECEMBER 27 1

## THE VENETIAN TWINS

**Figure 6**

[illegible][illegible]

**Abstract**

**It may be a little corny, with**  
**AMERICAN PRISONERS (R)** (see *Inside*)

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# Three AO openings; QLO duo; and Seymour single

Three openings on three consecutive Wednesdays from June 6 marked the commencement of this year's major season in Sydney — one brilliant success all round followed by a fine star turn substantiated by moderate support, followed by a very mediocre arrival at an opera which had succeeded brilliantly without first saw the light of day.

Such is life — an unpleasing shadow; you see some, you hear some, but it's all the Australian Opera season and seems disconnected up to its own worst enemy — both in the casting department and through the almost irrelevant importance of a language barrier even where none existed before.

The first offering of the season, Puccini's *The Girl of the Golden West* transcended the language barrier due to excellent — sometimes brilliant — casting, direction, staging and decor. The arrival, a revival of *Viola's La Fanciulla*, fared much despite an excellent Violina from Jean Cardon, mostly because she was not vocalised the main support she needed and deserved. The third, a revival in German of his ownest *Adriana from the Temple in English* that had been very successful was almost a disaster.

It is easy to dismiss Puccini's *La Fanciulla del West* — I consciously revert to the original Italian title because it is so Italian in fact as to defy being taken seriously in any other context — simply because of some of the glaring misquotations of its plot which progress from the unconvincingly unconvincing through the ridiculously absurd back to the unconvincingly unconvincing. It has a good deal more than its fair share of references — singers who sing *Qing Qing* (which translated also Italianesque) problems in the Wild West who sing the Negro-flavored refrain *Doo-dah-doo-dah-doo* as they dance the hightail drag with each other a matter who breaks down in public and sobe not loved for the life he has left back home.

But most of these references are concentrated in the opening minutes of Act I, in the first atmosphere-establishing stage of a performance. Once the metaphorical doors are open, almost from the moment the handsome Dick Adorno/Ramona man on the scene, they no longer matter very much.

It is a fascinating piece psychologically and musically, as that it just about runs made out the conventional opera western melody — a world of good details and costumes, thoroughly various women and thoroughly evil villains in *Fanciulla*, the hero is a handsome, gentle, with at least a trace of Mexican blood in his veins, the villain, or is close to it as the opera goes, is the sheriff — at least some of whose earlier in pursuit of the hero can fairly be ascribed to the fact



David Smith (Adorno) and Marilyn Zalkin (Ramona) in the AO's *Girl of the Golden West*  
Photo: Benicio Garcia

that the two men are rivals for the affections of the heroine of the plot.

And Ramona, the benevolent-hearted harlot, is a fascinating central hero — innocent as the purest of innocents at the start, Bible-looking, and almost unconvincingly naive. She grows up astonishingly fast in the opera progresses to the extent that by the end point of Act II she is able to reach as cards to win the freedom of her lover, rescue him from the gallows in Act III by saving her peace above and ride off with him to a new and hopefully more morally straight forward life somewhere well out of town. She is very American in the style of the frontier stereotype — tough on the outside but sporting the heart of gold, resourceful and brave in love to the point of cowardly. I have a sense in America who could be fit to use a T except that she can't sing for now.

Given the right conductor, a good chorus, and the right people to play the three leading roles, *La Fanciulla del West* can be a real winner, and a real off the for the Australian Opera 1979 Melbourne/Sydney performance. Above all it had Marilyn Zalkin who, though she was engaged professionally late in the piece to replace an ailing Carol Nolan, was anything but a substitute in dramatic and vocal impact. Her voice is as pure as silver, her dramatic presence the same in opening successfully so magnified for the moment scale of the opera the rest of the Sydney Opera House. But the way my voice and she could sing, she was Ramona. I am not sure how many other opera houses she could create convincingly no songs, for most request a good

deal more femininity and sheer vocal beauty, but in this role she was quite successful.

The hero of *Fanciulla Dick Adorno*, has long been one of David Smith's best roles — it was memorable in the last Australian production, in 1968, from the moment he appeared on the bar of the first act and parted his white coat the reverse side. Perhaps for long the part more beautifully and surely than this one, but then a shaky start, this year, he produced an abundance of marvelous Puccini sounds. Yet it would have been more particularly on opening night had he vocalised the old phrase at Ramona during her impassioned monologue over the old barrel containing the master's gold dust — as she declared her determination to defend the hard earned capital of the mining camp with her life, if necessary. Smith brought convincingly half way across the stage, barely acknowledging his presence at all.

In the other main role of the piece, John Shaw was an impressive shrewd — particularly in the spectacular far coat he was given to wear in Acts II and III. He also sang well and acted very well. Ramona's one-off his most successful roles.

Director Robert Layton deserves great credit for his attention to detail in the presentation of the best of minor characters and all this, in the performance department was not aided by the excellent design staff of Tom Langford. Though the first act was only moderately successful the other two were brilliant, the second act with the color sweeping only above half the stage width, surrounded by the music of pure melody to the blessed could be seen in light is heard as a wondrous and wondrous the third with a mere's best and sheer maintaining the atmosphere of the piece and providing a convenient scaffold for the expression that was far too much at the neck of time.

And finally it was all brought together by Carlo Fazio Cilento and the Elizabethan Sydney Orchestra — which worked in a fine ending of a fascinating score which was in great at the end of the best all round performance of the first month of this year's major Sydney season season.

The *Temple* which came next was disappointing not because of Jean Cardon's understatement of the tempo rate but because of the nature of her support. Partly this was the fault of the production, which a big and platform and far better staged in the more generous *Temple* of Ken Te Kanawa and John Sutherland who provided Cardon in the role.

Cardon was certainly all right. From the start, a fresh good action whose body the most of death are already clearly gaining away, yet she was quite a compelling heroine who could have been immensely successful in the right context. It

was well the did not have the same quality of support as Ren and the other Jews had when they sang. Violent in this production — the Alfredo of Ariano Azzaro and the Carmen part of Robert Altmann.

Helen Williams' Alfredo was a far more salubrious sound than we've heard from her before, but was still too white of tone, all but unrecognisable, and his singing was still as over. Likewise Gregory Yurkovich's Germont or later in the season, Erik Bedouk'sbach was promising robust in the part but neither quite within roles of the paternal authority and corporate vocal tenacity of Altmann.

The third coming of the season, a revival of *The Atlidation from the Savagel* incomprehensibly landed into German from the much more suitable English in which it made its debut in 1972 — was a pale shadow of the original in just about every regard. Only Donald Maclure (Klamm) remained from the original castings of principals and none of the changes were for the better. The reconstructed text was done on a shopping and looked it only the small castings of German-speaking members in the audience got anything like all the jokes despite some fact missing which got better as the evening progressed.

Giorgio Corbelli's *Concerto* was under too sensitive particularly only in the past — almost all of the more quaking in the territory of the fleetly difficult by art. Marston Allen Ayres, which comes in the depth of Act II. Once that moderately formidable obstacle was out of the way, the second of the same time to enter in the part had to give the strength of stage character necessary to project it across the footlights effectively.

Paul Ferro's *Belshazzar* was superbly acted and sung of a kind small of voice as the manner. It's clear after seeing John Berry. However, we have locally and wanted to compare with the conductor and what was going on at the rear of the stalls that he scarcely had a thought to spare for anyone else on stage. It was an interesting opportunity to see Ariano Azzaro, the original Belshazzar of this production, in the character role of Podolko, for he is not a character actor in focus, and it was something of a relief to put him into the particular role of the master of Geronte. Over who created Podolko in this production with considerable definition.

Rhonda Bruce this year's Blanche, suffered from the twin handicaps of having to follow in the footsteps of Anne Broadway in the role. And having to get across in German the last time Broadway could merely speak in English. Once she had settled in, though, she was a quite excellent Blanche — conveying through rapidly clear words a considerable amount of the wit and fire of the character.

And Peter van der Valk, a Paula Selten was a convincing of manner and authorisation of voice as before — a magnificent principal which even seemed with dignity being pushed into a truncated form of a high of voice in the final scene, then let someone and would have given

many an arbitrary moral a severe attack of the vertigo.

Visually, in other ways too, this year's production was quite different from the original, only the costumes and the old prop were the same; the original sets having been destroyed by fire. And though Klaus Fuchsdon's artless looking and looks of polished Turkish splendor, was marvellously evocative in first glance, it grew rather oppressive in the evening when on, all that considered as it was by significant change during the first acts — or even the addition of the mechanism of prop that was such a great asset to the original. Gone, were all at were the two lovely towers across stage for the abduction scene, replaced by loathsome animal-looking people in the side scenery that had almost no visual impact at all.

Finally, this year's *Sempele* — which will be seen shortly in Brisbane, also in German — was a revival that suffered greatly from what seemed to be almost total eradication of an excellent original.

While rather depressing, progress for Queensland opera (which may be improved) a little, perhaps by local production of the excellent overlapping season of *Hampden's Heral* and *Geront* and *Donizetti's Lucia di Lammermoor* presented recently in Brisbane by the Queensland Opera Company. Both productions suffered an overall level of excellence considerably above any previous experience of the company — an excellence of the most remarkable because only one point which was important for the season (New Zealand Anthony Bartlett, who was an excellent Edgardo to Phyllis Ball's quite exceptional Lucia).

The two productions made a thoroughly satisfying pair, if an unlikely combination as in this place, in addition they are a year well used for joint production by a company of limited resources. For *Heral* and *Geront* has just about no chorus and only one main principal and *Lucia* has lots of chorus and — apart from Lucia herself — only one main voice (quite principal role).

The great individual performance triumph of the two seasons was Phyllis Ball's Lucia of course; it was not perfect, but it abounded with moments of sheer beautiful vocal freedom and was well acted. Wholly, Ball did not escape the spectacular vocal ebullience so easily caused off by a husband or a folk, but after a few worrying moments in her opening, her own she had no trouble achieving what she envisaged.

Conductor Graham Young maintained firm control of the proceedings. James Rutherford's designs were clear to look at and appropriately evocative, and John Milner's production was straight forward and clear. I particularly liked the visual effect of the lantern scene, with all problems carefully frozen to a nicely paced passage of space, space from above as they variously exposed their individual, sometimes thoughtless. No doubt the lighting

designer of the QOC, James Rutherford, deserves kudos for this.

The individual cast of *Heral* and *Geront* would probably have to be deemed superb. Peter Cooke, for his reasonableness in dealing with the considerable demands of singing a fairly tall complex with flying reaches, exploding cries, pugnacious children coming to life and fumes descending from another world. But one must not slight the component with which the Queensland Theatre Orchestra coped with the large, Wagnerian style, score or the debilitation with which John Curro conducted or the reasonable direction of John Thompson.

Margaret Russell's *Heral* displayed convincing vocal powers and dramatic skill combined with the superbly convincing female appearance that made her such an outstanding *Rebel* in *Forest* last year. Gloria Barr's witch was a nice mixture of literary imagination and femininity. Louis Naper's Geront was a good effort without creating a very positive impression in memory. Margara Norman was a nicely authoritarian countess with a liberal dose of compassion not far below the surface, and Arthur Johnson a convincing dad.

Finally I must mention the second season of Barry Conyngham's music theatre piece about the convict Benj. Anderson — now I think just that, though it was originally staged in Melbourne last year as *The Apology of Benj. Anderson*. This piece was presented a Sydney's superbly appropriate Cell Block Theatre for a brief season last in June by the Secretariat Group — and was once again a triumph for virtuoso playwright Lynette Terrance, as well as the composer.

William Patterson's act consisted of a huge part unfolding clearly in what appeared to be twinkling reaching nearly to the ceiling of the gated music room, and accompanying a line for line at mid height as well as a ramp over which a police officer (despite Valour) could appear as required to deliver the lines of authority. The production was properly directed by Michael Rowcamp and nicely conducted by Vincent Pheasant in charge of a small group of musicians who were also required to act as pseudo-chemical reactions and plants.

It will be no surprise to those who have experienced Terrance's work in *Heaven's All Creation* or in Maxwell Davies' *Diary of a Mad King* or who have seen Benj. in Melbourne to know that this was a gripping individual performance — the sort of work that deserves a good deal wider audience than can be sustained in such an inherently sparse venue as the off the beaten track Cell Block.

Terrance has proved himself to be a useful Master. Brian and Doreen's performance has grown over potential but is worthy of the *Benj. Anderson* title — where he can fully utilize not only his conversational vocal and dramatic talents but his very athletic physique and his ability to convey deeply felt emotions across anger and madness.

# WILDSTARS — subliminal Rite of Passage ?

The Australian Dance Theatre's *Wildstars* is the company's first venture into a single full evening single work. They are the full evening last year, of course, when they premiered *Poppy*, and it is interesting to note that Ballet Rambert have just opened their full length evening work based on *The Asperger* choreographed by Glen Taylor.

Most of these works however are in a purely single strand narrative style. Margie's *Bonheur* that year and now *Wildstars* are stories in continuous narrative, full length evening pieces without a lack of plot structure.

There was concern in some quarters (including my own) that perhaps Jonathan Taylor, the choreographer of *Wildstars*, had been threatened into attempting something like this by the ADT board of directors since the Dance Company had been so successful in taking the plunge with *Poppy* and *Bonheur*. That it would come in not the case. Mr Taylor, on seeing a performance last year of *Mouset's Little Flower Show* thought that the most exchange was a complete reversion of his idea of dance and theatre.

*Mouset's Little Flower Show* was visual, not verbal, entertaining and disturbing. What it suffered from was a lack of any intellectual or even ambivalent backbone as any distinctly perceivable form. Nigel Triffin, the director and

co-designer of that production marshalled a thoroughly diverting and amusing parade of images and symbols but passed the lack of structural comprehension into the audience without any verification for doing so in any opinion.

Much the same sort of thing has happened in *Wildstars* too dance collaboration with Jonathan Taylor for the ADT. The audience is more or less told "make up your own mind, form your own themes, ideas and only then will the work be really powerful".

To say that is a bit odd, a sign of intellectual thinking and lack of nerve. To move all the darkly work in an audience is to leave the place open to any number of interpretations, some of them undoubtedly divergent from what the work is actually about.

I have no doubt that in the original spirit of events *Wildstars* will be chopped, adapted and improved. It seems that this is one of Jonathan Taylor's ways of working and only has to increase the way that his early *Flidertypster* was expanded and developed from a small juicy thing into a quite substantial piece of continuous dance comedy. Yet, on personal evidence, I don't think that there could be much improvement made in the structure of the work, nor any improvement of it, which would make it

make a palatable sense on a first viewing.

Jonathan Taylor is on record as saying that he thought his collaboration with Nigel Triffin was for about as this Mr Triffin would come to him with ideas and visions and that he (Taylor) would shape them into choreographic form. Personally, and upon my personal evidence, I don't think the collaboration was exactly ideal.

For a start, Mr Triffin admits that he doesn't like dance so he would therefore be due to say that he has no understanding of how a work can be any appreciation of dramatic structure for dance. Time and time again in *Wildstars* the dictionary gets on the nerves. The dance and the dancers have said everything that there is to say in the truncated story and are subsequently left wandering around waiting for Triffin, the music and the fading lights to reach up. Therefore when trawling moments of movement there are in the work are defined by continuous and vacuous padding.

The whole thing is staged as a series of raptures about the Wholeness of Man and the creeping nihilism that results from on his path to realization. It is made even more desperate by being chopped up into bite sized morsels that fit in with scope of Mr Triffin's dramatic work since Sean Egan Cinema clip-

If the Dance Company had the time to



Alan Israel and company, choreographer Jonathan Taylor

Photo David B. Semmens



John Blake and Joseph Scapellato choreograph by Jonathan Taylor. Photo: David B. Greenfield.

conscious Carl has written the music original music for *Pippin*. I have to see why the ADT wish to make massive financial resources coincide with dance the same. Expense are all very well they can be purely used to the point, but as *William* they aren't. They are far too heavy handed and overdone for the time short and underdeveloped and take themselves far too seriously. The structure progresses by a series of looks and poses.

After the curtain has been and the fog of modern required the table, we glimpse the Man (Alan) being rung up out of the general and only to be faced with a blown up projection of William's *The Great Wave*. This, I presume is meant to symbolize the chaos and turmoil that now exists in the mind of Man.

David is later joined by his alter ego (Joe Scapellato) who is meant to be the impression of the modern, savage and destructive side of the Man, who is appearing, gentle and expensive. The two of them later are joined by two females: Rudy's Woman and John Blake, who personify respectively the living and giving side of the Man's beloved, and the mocking, wanting aspect.

So we have two sets and two women linked in a double duology who have to absorb the true metaphor for precisely the entire length of the work. Effectively the play is handled somewhat more coarsely and dramatically by Glen Taylor when he created *Corvus*! The language, in all possible permutations are given by the system to themselves to determine the inner landscape of the piece. But it is symptomatic of the director that is right and wrong with *William* that these moments, staged purely in dance without too much interpretation from lighting, letters and 20 ft tall like *Samson*, are the most signifying, choreographically convincing and dramatically serious moments in the entire evening.

For example, the Man and his Woman (both

and William) dance a coded tale of love and support, that makes a moment established there as completely human and alive. This does prove and take occasionally, but of course a broken off to make way for still more Pippin Operatic lengths of coloured silk to consider the previous scene.

I might add also in this first act there is also a policy cabinet number intended for its apparent reason other than to supply some light relief. It has the opposite effect.

Act 2 opens again with the length of silk as David is surrounded, Lancelot like from a corner, again there is an exciting image that, as usual it is one in confusion and chaos's progress. It is another great first in a possible rather than a real pursuit. The dramatic confrontation start to move back and forth in the set. The Man dances with the Woman, then he starts up with her alter ego. They all slide upwards and exchange together, the Alter ego and the Woman lead the company in a very inspired dance line routine that supposedly needs the gentle and true moments of love that the Man and his Beloved have shared.

Towards the end of the evening the Alter ego (Joseph) is led to rest after a hysterical battle of exposure with the Man, while the Man is lifted onto a stage into a Neon Mandala, a veritable canyon of lighting lights that have been lowered there like Da Vinci's famous sketch of the Perfect Proportion of Man while he is surrounded by the entire cast and in his outfit (John) asks me why? who gave up as from like the group at the foot of the Cross. The curtain then falls in another fog of smoke and the evening is over.

Such description is coarse told in the minutes and hardly does justice to the set and cast of *William* as a whole, but it was frustratingly grasped as in the watching an effort to make some sort of total sense of what was happening.

Many members of the audience didn't or couldn't make any sense of it and were naturally enough annoyed and totally confused, but for some vague sense of education.

What is the greatest reason here, in talking about *William* as a dance event is the fact there have been so many good ideas diluted with showboating effects and bits and pieces which effectively smothered the choreography. It was by and large and worse of a good choreographer and some excellent dancers.

Now to the main company of the ADT works collectively there are no less reduced in coverage up, most impressive of scenes was the central quartet of Alan (Alan) between short, stances and well as tried in a study on stage, if not a personality, Joe Scapellato, John Blake and Rudy's Woman.

All four of them tried so hard to make the piece hang together in a way of subliminal *Star of Pippin*, but the heavy minded thinking behind the dramatic routine effectively took the lights on any sense of form and logic. Only those three lyrical moments between the main protagonists supplied any more choreographic interest or sense of control.

They were changed achievements of Jonathan Taylor, but he tried to offer very fine choreographic moments to give context to what it was possible. I would certainly like to see those three moments placed on their own as "Three scenes from *William*" at the next State Festival later this year.

But I'm afraid that of the ADT brings *William* to Sydney as a show piece the AETT that all there will have to be a substantial rethinking of the entire work and a lot of these existing efforts will have to be thrown out if it is to stand on its own two feet.

*William* is meant to be a direct theatre piece not a show of music, eye, dance. Apart from anything else the show behind these efforts are severely old fashioned. If Mr. Triffin is so interested in making light, sound and dance together in really new ways I suggest he take a look at the Alan Nichols Dance Company. He will then see just how far behind the times he really is.

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## DIMBOOLA — pretty basic



Bruce Spence and Marianne Bass in *Dimboola* Photo: Pouch Hawkins

Jack Heyward's *Dimboola* seems to have been filmed in much the same spirit as that of its sequencer when he put it together in the mid-sixties early seventies — anyway because it was easy then to make a laugh among suburban elites at the spectacle of such folk, crass as lurcher parties, kitchen sets, small town weddings, entrance drinks, people getting their

clashes off and raising Englishmen who try to make it. The joke was probably never intended to go through the slow wearing down of a film treatment.

It is probably beside the point, but *Dimboola* will do nothing to further the fortunes of the Australian film industry. It will not bring down the rising heads of the Victorian and NSW film

corporations, which funded it, but neither will it do them any good. Nor will it enhance the reputation of John Duggan who directed it. His first film *Mount To Moora* was a remarkable achievement, especially if it is remembered that it cost only \$125,000. He is said to have had \$300,000 to use on *Dimboola*, which was produced by the Press Factory (Melbourne) and shot effectively by Tom Cowen.

The stars are Bruce Spence, familiar and acceptable, and Marianne Bass, an interesting actress with a delicate, sensitive face who takes the role of Marianne well above the general sense of the proceedings. Some familiar figures from stage, film and television appear including Max Cullen, Terry McDermott, Max Galois, Bill Garner and Tim Robertson. Chad Morgan, a country singer who looks and acts like Edgar Bergen's Marianne, is also present with a song about a jilted rival who tries to cut his daughter a deal.

*Dimboola* can best be described as pretty basic. It is difficult to speculate from whence and where the producers expect to find an audience.

## Sydney Film Fest — Greater Union Finals

The two most imaginative, skilled, daring — if you like, simply outstanding — films which made it to the Greater Union Finals at the 23rd Sydney Film Festival were *My Sister Jack* and *My Sister*. The first took out the prize in the Fiction category, the second got nowhere except for a highly commended mention by the judging film critic Derek Malcolm, who "thinks" he will chose it for the London International Award. His final decision was for *My Sister* as an Aboriginal which had already been chosen best in the Documentary category.

The latter has strong emotive appeal and is beautifully photographed by Marlene Aronson but remains a forced "imitation" with a single point of view.

*My Sister* was put together by Enzo Coffey from her own experiences with Marlene Aronson who co-produced and co-scripted as well as photographed and was funded by the Creative Development Branch of the Australian Film Commission. It is interesting to note that Ms Aronson also photographed James Richardson's title film on indigenous children's friendships *Roadie* and *My Sister* was a prize — script and demand by Rivka Hartman. She has to be regarded as a major critical figure in Australian short films, but her cinema work is no far the most highly developed of her skills.

The winner in a disappointingly feeble entry for General Category was *Parade* produced in France. Australia earlier this year during its

season at the Filmhouse Cinema, Sydney by Riverside. *Parade* which fails to live up to its somewhat lofty pretensions. The dialogue is windy and hard to hear, two things we may have to endure as real life from the not insignificant but self-indulgent people in film portrayals, but which don't work for impact on the screen. He also makes the common local mistake of not varying his physical types leading to lack of contrast in characterization.

*My Sister* was Jack one of three films produced by the Film and Television School —



Enzo Coffey produced, co-wrote, co-script, wrote and co-directed *My Sister* and an Aboriginal

which are *The Gazing* and *The Way-See-Jobee* — is a worthy funny film directed, edited and scripted by the very talented Simon Holman. It features Ken McQuaid and John Hargreaves, with help from Bill Hargreaves and even a lot to those gifted people, but everybody connected with the film — Enzo Coffey who photographed it, Ursula Ross for sound, and Norman and McKinnon for music — seems to be overwhelmed.

*My Sister*, a feminist film as the title hints — no doubt so winning — is about entirely the work of Simon Lambert and Sarah Gibson, who share production duties: script, photography and editing, with financial support from the Creative Development Branch of the AFC. The chosen light has focused it on a woman's body — sensibly seen in — is mostly seen in separate from her personality. The script strikes a smart, delicate blow in this belief.

Other finalists in the Greater Union Awards were *Shadows*, produced, directed and scripted by Tim Wadman, which tells a woman's motherhood but colourful story of life in the outback. *Star* by Joel Pearson from the School of Art in the Tasmanian College of Advanced Education. *Shore* by Geoff Schreyer, a film which failed to come off. *Labyrinth* is drama that failed to come off. *The Gazing* and *The Way-See-Jobee* the film by Dennis Lawrence and the second by Geoff Bennett. Both are technically excellent but predictably plotted and heavy with mannerisms.



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George Theodor of Hellen



Bobby Lamb in **I RUFFLE**

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## The World of Theatre, Wit and Williams



### The World of the Thesaurus

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**Whistles** *Book by Patricia Laing, Houghton Mifflin (H) (7-8) \$9.95*  
*Whistles* (Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1990, 128 pages, illustrated)

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A. Brown, 1. B. Smith, 2. C. Jones, 3. D. Wilson, 4. E. Taylor, 5. F. Adams, 6. G. Baker, 7. H. Clark, 8. I. Evans, 9. J. Fisher, 10. K. Green, 11. L. Hall, 12. M. King, 13. N. Lee, 14. O. Martin, 15. P. Miller, 16. Q. Moore, 17. R. Nelson, 18. S. Oliver, 19. T. Parker, 20. U. Phillips, 21. V. Price, 22. W. Reed, 23. X. Roberts, 24. Y. Scott, 25. Z. Shaw, 26. A. Thomas, 27. B. Turner, 28. C. White, 29. D. Young, 30. E. King, 31. F. Green, 32. G. Brown, 33. H. Black, 34. I. Grey, 35. J. White, 36. K. Black, 37. L. Grey, 38. M. White, 39. N. Black, 40. O. Grey, 41. P. White, 42. Q. Black, 43. R. Grey, 44. S. White, 45. T. Black, 46. U. Grey, 47. V. White, 48. W. Black, 49. X. Grey, 50. Y. White, 51. Z. Black, 52. A. Grey, 53. B. White, 54. C. Black, 55. D. Grey, 56. E. White, 57. F. Black, 58. G. Grey, 59. H. White, 60. I. Black, 61. J. Grey, 62. K. White, 63. L. Black, 64. M. Grey, 65. N. White, 66. O. Black, 67. P. Grey, 68. Q. White, 69. R. Black, 70. S. Grey, 71. T. White, 72. U. 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**Interviewer's Perceived Subject Characteristics** (N=100) (n=33)

A lot of faith is now put in education. Actor training seems to be becoming almost as important as acting. Schools and colleges of advanced education and universities offer courses in all aspects of drama theory and the media. The idea of a broad liberal education backed up by practical experience is giving way before the diploma degree and certificate which become vocational means to an end.

At the moment it is virtually all students' first visit, there is a special seat of drama students who has can had the benefit of the exposure of high school theatre studies. When the secondary theatre courses begin to filter through universities and CAHA can begin to expect students with some grounding, but at the moment most students' knowledge of drama is restricted to high school literature courses and they have scarcely even been to the theatre. Teachers can only have in mind from the first principles, but often get students to undertake their production and even to present it, concerned as they are to give

These slightly old world French influences on home tracking are provided by Robert Company's new site book *The World of the Fleuve* which is a fun, partly American and obviously written specifically for an American culture reader. In common with it, this

attempts to explain them as a performance art, to the sort of students referred to previously. It is wide ranging and up to date, and very comprehensive about its subject. For some reason, and for many teachers, it will never command real appreciation to a third. Coogan obviously loves his theater (and all types of theater) more or less unconditionally (although for most two hours at the Living Theatre's student presentation). The students who asked all his slightly mystical questions at last night will be no less disappointed to realize in the distance I will confess that some performances I have seen felt slightly short of allowing me to "confess the modernness of the rest of human existence."

Many drama teachers will want to let their own enthusiasm work for them and reflect the students into this habit to find very good introductory reading as long as the Americans are concerned. The great role of the producer and the good movie are not as applicable here. It discusses generally the nature of "the theatrical story" and then the specific rules of scenes, playwrights, directors, and audiences in turn. There are lots of illustrations and quotations marked off from the text to help you look at the characters.

In Lawrence Sanders' *Questions for Our Time* (Harcourt, pp. 379 \$20) is a delightful distillation of "Caves of No Return and Craggling from Man's Ancient and Modern." It is a scholasticism collection, but Sanders of the Four Franciscan lived in a wide range and some interest and modern. The question is a struggle according to subject, and even ended up it is, very easy to find a family leaving for anything. It often can example for readers who are not only in the first, but also in the second.

From William Archer: "One of the first and most important things for a critic to learn is how to sleep undisturbed at the theatre."

*The World of Tennessee Williams*, edited by Richard P. Loom (Harcourt), pp.321, \$64 is a collection of ephemera and memorabilia from Williams' life and career — photographs of a house which might have inspired the setting for much and such a play, that sort of thing. Williams himself warns the reader off in his introduction: "In the course of his professional lifetime a writer is called upon to bring some things, sometimes that strike him as being somewhat ugly, places and his knowledge does strike me that many... are so vivid collections of moments, you, too, are not immune to this." Not to read.

There are other books about which I cannot say a great deal except that if you are interested in the subject you will be interested in the book. Patricia Longman's *Alfredus Jones: Quaker* (pp. 322 \$6.95) is a biography of "America's own holiness" who has inspired a generation of

THE  
WORLD OF  
TENNESSEE  
WILLIAMS



Edited by Richard E. Launitt  
WITH AN INTRODUCTION  
BY THOMAS E. WILLIAMS

building young careers. **Duke Ellington in America** (Harcourt) (p. 517-68) is "an intimate biography" by his son Mercer Ellington, who lived and traveled with him. Also for music-lovers are **John Fordham's** autobiography **No Bed of Roses** (p. 514-24). **Isadora Duncan** is back about the scandalous life of lovers, **Mary Pickford and Daughter** (Penguin) (p. 519-128) and an introduction to the world of ballet and dance by Margot Fonteyn: **A Dancer's World** (p. 515-66). **Film Review** (p. 520-78), edited by F. Murray Smith, is both an excellent reference and a pleasant book to browse in. There is also a new edition of the standard dictionary of ballets, **Ballets**, a Festival of Ballet. It gathers these lists into books that can all be obtained on special offer (through this magazine, and we are deathly ill we'll have it for you).

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**Abstract**

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## GUIDE

## A.C.T.

## ANNUAL CENTRE (49 040)

## Poetry Gallery

*Alive in Wonderland* adapted by the company director, Carol Woodrow. 16 August to 3 September

*Humorous Research Grants Drama Year*  
A number of performances and play readings in *Recent Australian Drama* Collection. Dr Margaret Williams. Dr Mark Thorsch. 27-28 August

*New Drama in English*. Conference. Mr Roger Palmer. 28-29 August

## CANDERA THEATRE (49 7000)

## Candera Performance Society

*My Fair Lady* by Lerner and Loewe. Producer, Lisa Adamson. Musical Director, Don Whitbread. 2-4 and 7-10 August

*Stripped Cow* — Offering *Acquiesce* Surrogate starring Ray Lawrence. 28-29 August and 27 August to 1 September

## PLAYHOUSE (49 040)

## P.O. Box

*The Muppet's Opera* by John Gray. 31 July to 4 August

Social Association of Australia  
Conference Gang Show. 10, 11, 13-15 August

## RED HOUSE THEATRE WORKSHOP

## (47 030)

## Jaguar Company

## Northcote

## The Empty House

A programme about solo (as yet uncensored) schools in the ACT

## THEATRE 3

## Columbia Repertory

*The Rembrandt Rise of Arturo* (4) by Bertolt Brecht. Director, Ralph Wilson

1-15 August. Wednesday to Saturday

For names, please contact Margaret Wells on 48 290

## N.S.W.

## ACTORS COMPANY (60 250)

*The Glass Menagerie* by Tennessee Williams. Director, Rodney Delaney. Until 24 August

## ARTS COUNCIL OF NEW SOUTH WALES

## (27 6011)

*Schools Tour: Blindly Buff* a children's play for 16-18 and primary metropolitan areas until 17 August

*Devine Coward Lot* Folk dances for infants, primary and secondary. South Coast until 17 August

*Adult tour: While the Sun* Book devised by and starring Leonard Toole as Henry Lawrence. until 17 August

*After Moor* Johannesburg, Central West and metropolitan areas until 25 August

## COURT HOUSE HOTEL (99 870)

## Orlando Street, Taylor Square

*Time and Chance* by Ruth Viner and Malcolm Franklin, director, Malcolm Franklin. Music, Stephen Aldridge. Friday and Saturdays throughout August

## AUSTRALIAN OPERA (21 100)

## Opera Theatre

*The Queen of Spades* by Tchaikovsky. Conductor, Mikhail Gouzenko. Producer, Robert Reynolds. *Simon* by Verdi. Producer, George Opitow. *Simon* by George Opitow, Producer, Michael Beauchamp. *Simon* by James Conductor, Charles Mackerras. Producer, John Copley. In repertoire through August

## DANCE COMPANY OF NSW (33 4600)

## Dance Theatre

*Comma Shura* Signature. *The Poet of Shadow* Schoenberg. *Random Harvest* Scriabin. *Glimpse* Ravel. September 1-17 and Touring from 18 August

## ENVELOPE THEATRE (49 007)

*Chapter Two* by Ned Simon. Director, Hynes Gordon. with Sharon Finnegan, Len Eastman. *Signature* Hynes and Greg Sullivan. Throughout August

## FRANK STRAINS' BULL N' BRUSH

## THEATRE RESTAURANT (27 467)

*Wants for the Ministry*, a musical revue from the land of the straitly to today, with Noel Simpby, director, George Carter. Throughout August

## GEMINIAN THEATRE (27 307)

*The Cow* Decker by William Sargant. director, Alan Perry. Until 11 August

*The Web* by Agatha Christie. director, Denise Allen. Commences 18 August

## HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE (33 341)

*Amor* a musical, director, George Mann. with Hynes Gordon, Jill Pennerman, Natalie Hayle. R. Simon. Anne Gregg and Kevin Johns. Throughout August

## HUNTER VALLEY THEATRE COMPANY

## (26 270)

*Mermaid Circle Playhouse*  
Current by Kunderoff and Masters. Director, Ross McGregor. choreography, Christine Kolar. with Jennifer McGowan, Valerie Butler. Until August

## KIRKILL PUP THEATRE

## (97 1415)

*Kirkill Hazel Wilson's Poem*  
*The Hesperus Ship* written and directed by Penny Gordon. with Patrick Ward and Janet Gabriel. Saturdays throughout August

## LES CURRIE PRESENTATIONS (158 5070)

*Mike Currie* traditional bush music. Touring infant, primary and secondary schools in Sydney metropolitan area. Until 17 August

## MARIAN STREET THEATRE (49 1160)

*The Cheesecake* by Philip Mackin. director, Peter Whitford. with Tom McCarthy. Ben Graham. John Allen. Russell Newman. Daniel Lee. Rosalind Spence. Mike Graham and Nick Lee. until 25 August

## MUSIC HALL THEATRE RESTAURANT

## (60 1220)

*One to the Devil* written and directed by Stanley Walsh. with Ron Haskins. Alan Wilson and Kevin Johnson. Throughout August

## JANE STREET THEATRE (60 1020)

*Waiting for Godot* by Samuel Beckett. director, George Withey. with Sonny Blaken. Mel Gibson. Sally Cahill. John Chapman. Don Crosby. Various

Cast: Alan Haskins, Robert Wilson, Barry Olin. Geoffrey Rush. John Ingleby and Kerry Walker. Until 18 August

## MUSIC LOFT THEATRE (97 6310)

*Go Together* written by Hilary Bamberger as a director. William Orr. with Lee Young and Ann Emery. Until 4 August

*Run or Wonderland* a new review by John McRae and Ron Fraser. director, Mel Gre. with Ron Fraser. Commences 4 August

## NEW THEATRE (109 340)

*Events With Question* the Boyer Star by MacCrack. director, Wayne van Hecke. Until early August

*Empty Bagels* by Sammie Locke. Effort. director, John Tucker. Commences 18 August

## NIMROD THEATRE (609 3000)

## Lyons

*Paradise North* by David Williamson. director, John Bell. with Frank Wilson. Jonathan Higgs. Cyril Bary. Graham Jones. Hynes Gordon. Kenneth Kennedy and John Hardman. Commences 12 August

*Downfall*  
A new play by David Allen about D.H. Lawrence and his time in Australia. director, Mel A. Field. Commences 3 August

## NSW THEATRE OF THE DEAF (27 1300)

*School tour* throughout metropolitan area. *My Home is Your Garage* film for primary schools and *Archer* Spent Leader film. Words for secondary schools. director, Ian Wilson

## PLAYERS THEATRE COMPANY (30 721)

## Book Pavilion Theatre

*The Tempest of the Storm* by William Shakespeare. director, Graham Dean. Throughout August

## 200 PLAYHOUSE (60 684)

## (formerly the Independent Theatre)

*The Conventary* Tule by Geoffrey Chaucer. Adapted and produced by Frank Knowles. 10 July-12 August

*Being along* along children's musical by Eric Warren with 640 Players. director, John Howitt. Friday, Saturday and Sunday through out August

## Q THEATRE (407 31 373)

*The Shambles* by David Williamson. As Perch until 3 August. *Perch* until 3 August. *1000* until 15 August

*The Importance of Being Ernest* by Oscar Wilde. Commences Perch 25 August

## RECENT THEATRE (1 697)

*The Two Women* with Rosette Cobert and Rosette Barker. until 18 August

*Four Act* by P.M. Byrne. a Film Design production. Commences 27 August

## RYE KINA TRUCKING COMPANY

## (25 302)

## Wagga

*Gods* director, Darren Jamieson. 10-16 August

## ROCKS PLAYERS (158 4700) (26 744)

*The Rembrandt Rise of Arturo* (4) by Bertolt Brecht. director, Anthony Bartlett. throughout August

In support with *Lulu* on adaptation of *Midnight's Eve* Spent and *Paradise* film. director, Alan Karpf. until 17 August





# Guide

July 10 August November 20 August, Kyness 24 August

**LAST LAUGH THEATRE RESTAURANT**  
(014-6226)

*The Great Show: Come On presents the Great Come Off*

LAMAMA (038-4993) or (047 6885)

*A Men Even* by Lloyd Jones Friday-Sunday, 9-12 August

Choreography written and directed by C. Ross  
Theatre Sunday, 10 August 3.30pm  
Café for Help by Peter Howarth  
10-10pm, 15-18 August

**MELBOURNE THEATRE COMPANY**  
0214-6889

*Round of Six Theatre*  
*Enoch Pinch's Great Big Adventure Book for Boys* by John George, director, Bruce Mylon  
Adventure Theatre

*Uncle Fester* by Arthur Closson, director, Bruce Mylon, director, Tanya McCallin, Tu-4 August  
*The Abolish* by R. B. Mendon director Peter James, director, Anne Pinner, Tu-12 September  
Tribute Productions  
Youth Work classes directed by Stephen  
Maguire School Theatre Project and Current  
Up — country has its theatre programme

**OLD HILL, CELESTINE (021 21 1444)**  
Drama Centre of Deakin University Regular  
evening productions

**PALACE THEATRE (04-0655)**

*Don Quixote*, Miami, conductor, Richard  
Barrymore, producer, George Opeline, Australian  
Opera Company

**PILGRIM PUPPET THEATRE (019 6230)**

*First Step* by James Davis adapted by Gailana  
Barr, Daily 10-10 am and 2-10 pm, Monday  
Friday, 3-10 pm, Saturday

**POLYGLOT PUPPETS (018 1112)**  
Multi-cultural puppet theatre with Mogg the cat  
and friends, touring schools and community  
centres

**PRINCESS THEATRE (042 2911)**

*AMS Playoffs*, D'Arcy Carr Company, 24  
July-4 August  
*Providence de Monte Carlo* All male Ballet  
Company, 11-21 August  
*Company and Michael* 25 August-1 September

**TIKE AND JOHN'S THEATRE LOUNGE**  
(041-8754)

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Vic Gordon and guest artists

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**PUMPERN THEATRE** 43 8137

**WILLIAMSTOWN LITTLE THEATRE**

374 4367

798 8624

For further contact Les Cartwright on 351 1777

## WESTERN AUSTRALIA

**HILL IN THE WALL (091 2445)**

*Zander* by Strachan Gervin, Cilla McCall  
9 August-1 September

**NATIONAL THEATRE COMPANY**

1131 1945  
Sallyday at Home by Frances Duffield  
Director, Edgar Mearns with Barry Croghan  
From 25 July

*The Men from Marloway* by Dorothy Hewitt  
World Premier Director, Stephen Berry From  
30 August

**WA ARS COUNCIL TOURING PRO-  
GRAMME**

South West, Tarnantell Theatre Co  
Goldfields/ National Theatre TIE, Lloyd Noble,  
Fremantle

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For further contact Joan Ambrose on 799 6439



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## THESPIA'S PRIZE CROSSWORD NO. 14

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

### Across:

- 1 Down as soon as a beautiful ball in France (4)
- 2 Feet about lost on a ship (6)
- 3 Intricate, contrary, that there is nothing to  
suspense (4)
- 4 Deal a wrap, connoisseur (5,4)
- 5 Savour as if one there might have an  
impression (6)
- 6 Particular is narrowly noted each (6)
- 7 Next to the most interesting around ship (6)
- 8 In connection with a character about a  
small girl (6)
- 9 I cannot to the day to prepare fertilisation (4)
- 10 Clarity again in the holiday place (6)
- 11 Backings for potatoes in some 'vener' (11)
- 12 "Yard" Cactus from — and hungry look  
Julia (5,4)
- 13 Horace Plut (4)
- 14 Old lady and Linda survived the howl-  
ed-offen — no words for back threatened (4)

### Down:

- 1 Above the water table — take it is light (6)
- 2 When we return the lady with the helmet and  
under to die (4)
- 3 Confrontation consisted in trunk (word) for  
Go many (6)
- 4 Part of variety and another (6)
- 5 Electrical plug musician? (10)
- 6 "... but now they can speak with twenty moral  
masters on their —" (10)
- 7 Toss I launched to confirm a religious man (6)
- 8 Member party first usually synonymous (4,6)
- 9 Put off by action in which Lawrence and the  
helping are involved (6)
- 10 Spoil back and pocket flip to be related (6)
- 11 Agitated to be passed with another we have (6)
- 12 Might go in the border in chess (6)
- 13 Conspire in following action from back (6)
- 14 Become a philosopher, we hear (6)



The first correct entry  
drawn on August 15th  
will receive one year's  
free subscription to T.A.

See month's winners.

The winner of last  
month's Crossword was  
B. Roger Jones of Lower  
Bassenden, Queensland.